Brock University

Institutional Quality Assurance Processes

(May 16, 2011)

Quality Assurance Planning Committee
Greg Finn
Marilyn Rose
Pat Beard

TABLE OF CONTENTS

-)	OVERVIEWp. 3
II)	Cyclical Reviewsp. 8
	A) General Frameworkp. 8
	B) Timelinep. 9
	C) Process Summaryp. 9
	D) Manualp. 10
	E) Evaluation Criteriap. 10
	F) Schedulep. 12
	G) Preparation of Self Studyp. 13
	H) The Review Committeep. 13
	I) List of Intervieweesp. 14
	J) Site Visit and Reportp. 14
	K) Comments/Responsesp. 16
	L) Final Assessment Reportp. 17
	M) Quality Council Submissionp. 17
	N) Publication of Resultsp. 17
	O) Monitoring of Review Resultsp. 17
	P) Report to Board of Trusteesp. 18
III	New Program Reviewsp. 19
	A) General Frameworkp. 19
	B) Timelinep. 19
	C) Process Summaryp. 19
	D) Statement of Intentp. 20
	E) Evaluation Criteriap. 21
	F) Program Proposal Briefp. 24
	G) Reviewers
	H) List of Intervieweesp. 25
	I) Site Visit and Reportp. 25
	J) Academic Unit Responsep. 26
	K) UPC/SGSC Responsep. 26
	L) Decanal Responsep. 26
	M) Assessment p. 27
	N) Publication of Resultsp. 27
	O) Report to Board of Trusteep. 27
	P) Subsequent Processesp. 27
IV)	Modifications to Existing Programsp. 28
. ,	A). Statement of Intent
	B) Assessmentp. 28
V)	Reviews of Joint Programsp. 29

I) OVERVIEW

- A) As Brock University's chief academic decision-making body, Senate is responsible for determining the educational policy of the institution and for maintaining high academic and program standards and has a major role in ensuring that resources are sufficient for both current and new initiatives (The Brock University Act, Article 13, i and j). A continuing process of academic review is critical to the discharge of these responsibilities. In this context, the University's academic review policy is subject to the authority of Senate through its Academic Review Committee (ARC).
- B) The review of existing academic programs, and the introduction of new programs, is a self-regulatory process conforming to the principles of the Quality Assurance Framework developed by COU, and is subject to periodic audit by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance "Quality Council" (see http://www.cou.on.ca/Related-Sites/The-Ontario-Universities-Council-on-Quality-Assura.aspx).
- C) Responsibility for the conduct of academic reviews and the evaluation of new academic program lies with the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and the Provost shall be the "authoritative contact" between Brock University and the Quality Council.
- D) Brock's Internal Quality Assurance Processes (IQAP) will apply to the consideration of all graduate and undergraduate academic programs (see definition below), including any offered jointly or in collaboration with other institutions. All diplomas and certificates that include credit courses, including graduate diploma programs, are covered by this policy. The IQAP is subject to approval by the Quality Council when it is initiated and, thereafter, when it is revised.
- E) Throughout this document, the following definitions will apply:

1) New Programs

Any degree, degree program, or program of specialization, currently approved by Senate or equivalent governing body, which has not been previously approved for that institution by the Quality Council, its predecessors, or any intra-institutional approval processes that previously applied. A change of name, only, does not constitute a new program; nor does the inclusion of a new program of specialization where another with the same designation already exists (e.g., a new honours program where a major with the same designation already exists). To clarify, a 'new program' is brand-new: that is to say, the program has substantially different program requirements and substantially different learning

outcomes from those of any existing approved programs offered by the institution. Examples of what constitutes a 'new program' are provided in the Quality Assurance Guide. [http://www.cou.on.ca/Related-Sites/The-Ontario-Universities-Council-on-Quality-Assura/Policies/Quality-Assurance-Framework---Guide.aspx]

Not for-credit and for-credit undergraduate diploma programs are not subject to approval or audit by the Quality Council.

All new programs (undergraduate and graduate) are subject to the procedure governing new program proposals and subject to external approval by the Quality Council. The approval process for new programs requires external consultants. The New Program Approval Protocol applies to new undergraduate degrees, undergraduate specializations and majors (for which a similar specialization/major is not already approved), graduate degrees and diplomas, collaborative graduate programs and new fields in a graduate program. However, the protocols for these approvals vary as follows:

- (a) The <u>Protocol for New Degree Program Approvals</u> applies to new undergraduate degrees, undergraduate honours specializations and majors (for which a similar specialization/major is not already approved), graduate degrees, joint degrees and intra/inter-institutional degree programs (dual credential, collaborative and combined degrees) when a new parent program at the University is being proposed in conjunction with the intra/inter-institutional degree). New degree programs require external (Quality Council) approval.
- (b) The <u>Protocol for New Programs with Expedited Approvals</u> applies to new for-credit undergraduate certificates, graduate diplomas, new fields to existing graduate degrees, and joint degrees and intra/inter-institutional degree programs (dual credential, joint, and conjoint degrees) when a parent program already exists.

Those changes not identified as major are, by default, minor and will be dealt with through the internal Senate processes in this regard – which is to say through the Senate Undergraduate Program Committee or the Senate Graduate Studies Committee.

The introduction of new minors, concentrations or options, within a program (which do not require Quality Council approval) are handled internally through the annual calendar submission process, overseen by the Senate Undergraduate Program Committee or Senate Graduate Studies Committee, respectively.

2) Major Modifications

The Quality Assurance Framework defines major modifications as changes including one or more of the following program changes:

- (a) requirements for the program that differ significantly from those existing at the time of the previous cyclical program review;
- (b) significant changes to the learning outcomes;
- (c) significant changes to the faculty engaged in delivering the program and/or to the essential physical resources as may occur, for example, where there have been changes to the existing mode(s) of delivery.

Application of the QAF criteria listed above will determine when proposed changes are considered "major." In addition, Brock considers other kinds of changes to be substantive and to require submission to ARC for review as major modifications. For example:

- (a) deletion or merging of programs;
- (b) renaming of programs;
- (c) changes in admission or progression requirements;
- (d) substantial alterations to a program (in terms of approved requirements, learning objectives and/or required resources) which effectively reorganize the program, impact another Faculty, or result in significant additional resource requirements;
- (e) changes to program content that affect the learning outcomes but do not meet the threshold for a "new program";
- (f) changes in program regulations with broad implications;
- (g) changes to the faculty delivering the program (e.g., a large proportion of the faculty retires; new hires alter the areas of research and teaching interests);
- (h) changes that run counter to the university's academic plan(s);
- (i) the introduction of a new option (e.g., new research-related exit requirement, course-only option at the master's level) in a graduate program;
- (j) the offering of an existing program substantially online where it had previously been offered in face-to-face mode (or *vice versa*);
- (k) changes to the bridging options for college diploma graduates;
- (l) significant change in the laboratory/seminar/tutorial components of a program or to full- or part-time program options;
- (m)the introduction or deletion of a work experience, co-op option, internship or practicum, or portfolio as a program requirement;
- (n) the creation, deletion or re-naming of a field in a graduate program; and
- (o) other changes that may result in additional or reduced resource requirements.

Major modifications to existing programs do not require submission of a Proposal Brief to the Quality Council except when the University requests endorsement of the Quality Council. Rather, there will be internal expedited reviews (i.e., do not involve the use of external reviewers).

Modifications to existing minors, concentrations and options (which do not require Quality Council approval) are handled internally through the annual calendar submission process, overseen by the Senate Undergraduate Program Committee or Senate Graduate Studies Committee, respectively.

The institutional arbiter in defining what constitutes a major as opposed to a minor program change will be the Provost in consultation with ARC. Major modifications must be reported to the Quality Council and to MTCU annually.

3) Joint and Inter-Institutional Degrees

For the purposes of this document:

- (a) joint degree programs are programs of study offered in conjunction with another institution in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a single degree document;
- (b) dual credential programs are programs of study offered by Brock and one or more universities or by Brock and a college or institute, including Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning, in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a separate and different degree/diploma document being awarded by each of the participating institutions; and
- (c) conjoint programs are programs of study, offered by a postsecondary institution that is affiliated, federated or collaborating with Brock university for which a single degree document signed by both institutions is awarded.

4) Expedited Reviews

In cases of expedited reviews, Brock Reviews Office submits a proposal brief and the rationale for the change or new program to the Quality Council. The proposal is reviewed based only on applicable elements of the quality assurance criteria that would be employed for a full review. The appraisal and approval processes are significantly reduced.

The Quality Assurance Framework allows for expedited approval in the following situations:

- (a) a proposal for a new graduate Collaborative Program;
- (b) a proposal for a new for-credit Graduate Diploma. Note that Graduate diploma programs require Quality Council Expedited Approval (no external reviewers required) prior to their adoption. Once approved, such programs will be incorporated into the university's schedule for cyclical reviews as part of the parent program;

- (c) an institution requests endorsement of the Quality Council to declare a new Field in a graduate program;
- (d) major modifications to an existing program for which the institution requests Quality Council review.

The process for Quality Council appraisal is as follows:

The Council's Appraisal Committee reviews the submission, conferring with the university and receiving further information as needed. The Appraisal Committee then decides:

- (a) That the university proceeds with the proposed changes/new programs. OR
- (b) That it consult further with the university over details of interest or concern regarding the proposed changes/new programs. Normally, these subsequent consultations will be brief and affirmative in their outcome.

5) Certificates and Diplomas

Certificates (comprised of undergraduate credits) are awarded at the undergraduate level only. Diplomas (comprised of graduate-level credits) are awarded only at the graduate level.

II) CYCLICAL REVIEWS

A) General Framework

- 1) Programs in the University will be subject to an academic review on a periodic basis such that all will be reviewed over a period of eight years. The process will be scheduled in such a way as to review the academic unit responsible for a program (or group of programs) concurrently with the program review. Where both exist, the undergraduate program will be reviewed at the same time as the graduate program. Many factors contribute to the collegial and scholarly life of the unit, including the academic and administrative complement, research and scholarly activity, infrastructure, and governance. These all bear on the quality of academic programs and the broad educational experience of students. Reviews are thus intended to ensure and improve quality in all of these aspects.
- 2) For the purposes of this review policy, a program is defined as a set of courses approved by Senate to constitute all or part of the requirements for a degree designation offered by Brock University.
- 3) For those units that are subject to accreditation reviews, the accreditation review may fulfill most of the requirements of this IQAP. In each case, the Academic Review Committee (ARC) will monitor the accreditation review in order to insure that all of the components of Brock's review process are met. In cases where there are discrepancies or gaps, ARC will require the submission of additional information.¹

The unit or university officer responsible for the accreditation exercise will, in consultation with the appropriate Dean and the Reviews Office, submit a draft Final Assessment Report for ARC's consideration.

- 4) ARC shall oversee academic reviews. The Terms of Reference and composition of ARC are set out in Faculty Handbook II: 9.13 (see http://www.brocku.ca/university-secretariat/facultyhandbook/section2#_genIndex46).
- 5) Academic Reviews shall be carried out under the general supervision of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and the appropriate Deans. For

Brock IQAP May 12, 2011

¹ Currently, the following accreditation reviews are recognized:

a) for the Faculty of Business, the five-year reviews required to maintain accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International;

b) for the pre-service and in-service programs offered by the Faculty of Education (including all concurrent pre-service programs), the regular accreditation reviews conducted by the Ontario College of Teachers; and c) For the Department of Nursing, the accreditation program of the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing.

undergraduate reviews, the appropriate Dean(s) shall be the Dean(s) of the Faculty (or Faculties) within which the academic unit resides. For graduate reviews, the appropriate Deans shall be both the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the relevant Faculty or Faculties.

B) Timeline

- December: The Provost confirms units to be reviewed in the coming year.
- <u>January-February</u>: Orientation sessions for departments/programs with upcoming reviews.
- <u>January- February</u>: Reviews Office provides units with current data as a starting point for development of self studies.
- March-June: units begin to develop their self studies.
- <u>July-October</u>: Reviews Office forwards additional data as available and administers student surveys for reviews that are pending.
- October 1st: units forward proposed reviewers to Reviews Office.
- <u>Mid-November</u>: November 1st count date information made available to units for reviews.
- November-December: Reviews Office sends survey data to units.
- <u>January 1-8</u>: Submission of briefs to ARC; Reviews Office begins to schedule and make arrangements for reviews.

C) Process Summary

- Schedule of program reviews for upcoming academic year is presented to Senate (January)
- Department/Centre/Program prepares its self study and submits the self study and a list of proposed reviewers (at least four external reviewers and two internal reviewers) to the Reviews Office, along with a brief profile of each nominee
- Provost, in consultation with the relevant Dean(s) rank orders the proposed reviewers.
- The Reviews Office contacts selected reviewers in rank order and begins to organize site visits.
- Reviews Office sends self study to the relevant Dean(s) for review.
- After consultation with the unit the Dean(s) submits the self study to ARC.
- ARC consults with the Dean(s) and identifies any required changes/additions to the self study.
- If required, the unit re-submits the self study to ARC.
- ARC approves or requests further changes to the self study.
- Reviews Office sets up schedule for site visit, two days in length, with all reviewers attending at same time.
- Reviewers submit their report to ARC within four weeks of site visit.

- Unit responds to ARC re: the Reviewers' Report, as does the Senate Undergraduate Program Committee (UPC) for undergraduate programs or the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) for graduate programs. Dean(s) will respond after receipt of unit/senate committee response.
- ARC considers Reviewers' Report and responses from the Unit, UPC or SGSC, and the relevant Dean(s), who join ARC for this discussion.
- ARC, in consultation with the unit under review, develops the Final Assessment Report, including an Executive Summary, Implementation Plan, and Monitoring Plan and submits that report to Senate for approval.
- ARC distributes the approved Final Assessment Report to the Centre or Department, and the Quality Council.
- The Executive Summary and Implementation Plan are posted on the Brock web site.

D) Manual

The Reviews Office shall publish and make available an Academic Review Manual that will provide administrative details with respect to review policies and practices (see http://www.brocku.ca/vp-academic/academic-reviews-planning/academic-reviews).

This manual shall provide guidance on the conduct of rigorous, objective and searching self studies and reinforce the potential benefits that can accrue from effective self studies. It will also identify responsibilities for the collection, aggregation and distribution of institutional data and outcome measures required for self studies, and specify the format required for the self study

E) EVALUATION CRITERIA

The self study for the review of existing undergraduate or graduate programs shall address the evaluation criteria set out below.

1) Objectives

- (a) Program is consistent with the institution's mission and academic plans.
- (b) Program requirements and learning outcomes are clear, appropriate and align with the Faculty's statement of the undergraduate and/or graduate Degree Level Expectations.

2) Admission requirements

(a) Admission requirements are appropriately aligned with the learning outcomes established for completion of the program.

3) Curriculum

- (a) The curriculum reflects the current state of the discipline or area of study.
- (b) Evidence of any significant innovation or creativity in the content and/or delivery of the program relative to other such programs.

(c) Mode(s) of delivery to meet the program's identified learning outcomes are appropriate and effective.

4) Teaching and assessment

- (a) Methods for assessing student achievement of the defined learning outcomes and degree level expectations are appropriate and effective.
- (b) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the means of assessment, especially in the students' final year of the program, in clearly demonstrating achievement of the program learning objectives and the institution's (or the Program's own) statement of Degree Level Expectations.

5) Resources

(a) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the academic unit's use of existing human, physical and financial resources in delivering its program(s). In making this assessment, reviewers must recognize the institution's autonomy to determine priorities for funding, space, and faculty allocation.

6) Quality indicators

While there are several widely-used quality indicators or proxies for reflecting program quality, units are encouraged to include available measures of their own which they see as best achieving that goal. Outcome measures of student performance and achievement are of particular interest, but there are also important input and process measures which are known to have a strong association with quality outcomes. Indicators that may be used, where relevant, include the following:

- (a) **Faculty Complement**: qualifications, research and scholarly record; class sizes; percentage of classes taught by permanent or non-permanent (contractual) faculty; assignments and qualifications of part-time or temporary faculty;
- (b) **Current Students**: applications and registrations; retention rates; time-to-completion; final-year academic achievement; graduation rates; course evaluations; and
- (c) **Graduates**: rates of graduation, employment six months and two years after graduation, postgraduate study, "skills match" and alumni reports on program quality when available.

7) Quality enhancement

Initiatives taken to enhance the quality of the program and the associated learning and teaching environment. This will include the disposition of concerns and recommendations raised in previous reviews, and areas identified through the conduct of the self study that require attention and/or that hold promise for enhancement.

Attention will also be paid to those academic services that directly contribute to the academic quality of the program(s) under review.

8) Additional graduate program criteria

- (a) Evidence that students' time-to-completion is both monitored and managed in relation to the program's defined length and program requirements.
- (b) Quality and availability of graduate supervision.
- (c) Definition and application of indicators that provide evidence of faculty, student and program quality, for example:
 - (i) **Faculty**: funding, honours and awards, and commitment to student mentoring;
 - (ii) **Students**: admission averages, scholarly output, success rates in provincial and national scholarships, competitions, awards and commitment to professional and transferable skills;
 - (iii) **Program**: evidence of a program structure and faculty research that will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience.
- (d) 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.

F. Schedule

- 1. The Provost and Vice-President, Academic, in consultation with the Deans, shall determine an eight-year schedule for the review of all programs and shall identify the academic units responsible for those programs. Under very exceptional circumstances, a Dean may request either the review of a particular program or a delay in a scheduled review.
- 2. The Provost and Vice-President, Academic, in consultation with the Deans, shall confirm by December 31st annually the programs to be reviewed during the subsequent academic year and shall present that information to the January meeting of Senate.
- 3. Annually in January-February, the Office of the Provost will conduct an orientation session for those responsible for self studies in academic units and programs designated to be reviewed in the subsequent year. This session will include an examination of the process, the required contents of the self study document and the nature of the data being provided to inform the review process.
- 4. Also in January-February, the Reviews Office will provide each academic unit with current data as a starting point for the development of that unit's self study.

5. By March 1st, the academic unit shall establish a committee to document its self study. The composition the Committee shall be reported to the Academic Reviews Office.

G. Preparation of the Self Study

The self study prepared by the unit should be broad-based, reflective, forward-looking and will include a critical analysis of the unit. Although prepared by a committee, the self study shall be developed in consultation with all of the faculty and staff members associated with the unit, and with students. The input of others deemed to be relevant and useful, such as graduates of the program, representatives of industry, the professions, practical training programs, and employers may also be included.

The self study shall be confidential to the Reviewers, Deans, ARC and the Reviews Office.

H. The Review Committee

- 1. For each review there shall be established a Review Committee which shall normally consist of:
 - a) either one or two external reviewers for an undergraduate program review, two external reviewers for reviews of graduate programs (at least one of whom will be from outside Ontario), and two external reviewers for the integrated review of an undergraduate and graduate program (one from outside Ontario); and
 - b) one reviewer who is a Brock faculty member from outside the discipline (or interdisciplinary group) engaged in the program. This faculty member should be someone familiar with the operation of the program under review (but at "arm's length") and have experience with program development and delivery. He/she shall participate fully in the review.
- 2. Additional discretionary members may be assigned to the Review Committee where ARC so decides. Such additional members might be appropriately qualified and experienced individuals selected from industry or the professions, and/or, where consistent with the institution's own policies and practices, student members.
- 3. Reviewers shall be at "arm's length" from the program and to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, the reviewers should not:
 - a) be a close friend or relative of a member of the unit undergoing the review:
 - b) have been a research supervisor of a member of the unit, within the past six years;

- c) have been a graduate student of a member of the unit within the past six years;
- d) have collaborated with a member of the unit within the past six years or have plans to collaborate with them in the immediate future; or
- e) have been a visiting scholar/teacher in the unit in the past six years,
- 4. Full disclosure of all past affiliation(s) is required to assist in the selection and to ensure an "arm's length" relationship. The reviewers will be associate or full professors, or the equivalent, with program management experience.
- 5. By October 1st, the academic unit shall develop a list of at least four potential external and two potential internal reviewers from which the Provost, in consultation with the Dean(s), shall make the final selection.

I. List of Interviewees

Prior to the completion of Self Study, the academic unit shall prepare a list for the Reviews Office of those to be interviewed by the reviewers. Interviewees shall include:

- a) the Provost and Vice-President, Academic;
- b) the relevant Dean(s);
- c) all faculty associated with the unit (including cross-appointed and limited term faculty, if appropriate);
- d) administrative staff associated with the unit;
- e) a representative sample of students associated with the program (with no faculty present);
- f) representatives of the Library;
- g) faculty from cognate disciplines;
- h) for units with Coop programs, representatives of the Coop Office; and
- i) others as deemed appropriate.

J. Site Visit and Report

- 1. The Reviews Office shall forward the approved Self Study and any related materials to the reviewers.
- 2. The reviewers shall conduct an on-site visit, preferably at the same time. The length of the on-site visit will normally be two days but three days when required (e.g., for larger units or for combined reviews), with a portion of the second/third day allocated to preliminary preparation of their report.

- 3. The Reviews Office, in consultation with the relevant Dean(s), shall provide an on-site orientation for the reviewers and shall provide them with guidelines for the conduct of the review.
- 4. In accordance with the evaluation criteria outlined above (Section II.E), the reviewers will be invited to:
 - a) assess, from an external point of view, the validity of the Self Study as an analysis of the program and its current condition;
 - b) provide an external perspective on the program in terms of its comparability with similar programs elsewhere, its stature on a national scale, and its success in producing excellent graduates;
 - c) recommend actions that will improve the program; and
 - d) recommend an Outcome Category.
- 5. An Outcome Category is assigned individually to each program at the conclusion of the review as follows:

Good Quality with National Prominence (Category 1)	The program is of excellent quality with strong student demand and a national or international reputation for producing high quality graduates. Few changes are required. There
	will be a commitment to maintain the leadership role of the program and perhaps enhance program strength.
Good Quality (Category 2)	The program shows academic vigour and continuing student demand. The program is progressive and produces good quality graduates. With attention to minor weaknesses, it will maintain its place as a standard program of the University
Good Quality With Concerns (Category 3)	The program shows continuing vitality. The review has identified weaknesses that must be addressed. There is confidence that implementation of the action plan will move the program to Category 2. There will be a commitment to maintain program strength.
Non-Viable	The program has shown fundamental deficiencies and little academic vitality over an extended period. No realistic plan is available to improve the program to Category 2. The program will be recommended for closure.

6. The reviewers shall submit their report to the Reviews Office, normally within four weeks of the site visit.

The report should be organized as follows:

- a) Learning Objectives: Are the learning objectives clear, concise and appropriate? Has the unit provided evidence to show that they have been met and has it adequately described the methods used to measure that achievement?
- b) Delivery: Is the program delivered in a way that ensures the learning objectives will be met?
- c) External Perspective: How does this program compare to programs elsewhere?
- d) Recommendations: What changes would improve the program?
- e) Outcome Category Recommendation.
- f) Confidential Recommendations/Comments: relating to personnel issues or other matters involving specific individuals. This is an optional section to be used only if recommendations and/or comments of a confidential nature are deemed necessary by the reviewers. This section will only be released to the Dean(s), the academic unit and ARC.
- 7. The Reviews Office will distribute copies of the Reviewers' Report to the Dean(s), academic unit, ARC, and either the Senate Undergraduate Program Committee or the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (as appropriate), with the exclusion of any confidential recommendations/comments (as per 6.f above) as appropriate.

K. Comments/Responses

- 1. Academic Unit Response
 - a) The academic unit shall develop a response, normally within four weeks of receiving the report, to the comments, observations and recommendations contained in the Reviewers' Report and shall submit that response to the appropriate Dean(s), who shall then submit it to ARC.
 - b) If the reviewers have submitted confidential comments (as per 6.f above), the unit response, if any, to those comments will be treated as confidential to the Dean(s) and ARC.

2. UPC/SGSC Comments

The UPC or SGSC shall be invited to provide comment on the Reviewers' Report and shall submit any such comments to ARC (normally within three weeks of receiving the report).

3. Decanal Response

a) After consultation with the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and the academic unit, the relevant Dean(s) shall submit to the Academic Reviews Committee his/her/their responses to:

- i) the recommendations advanced by the Reviewers; and
- ii) the unit's response to the Reviewers' Report.
- b) This response will also describe:
 - i) any changes in organization, policy or governance that would be necessary to meet the recommendations;
 - ii) the resources, financial and otherwise, that would be provided in supporting the implementation of selected recommendations; and
 - iii) a proposed timeline for the implementation of any of those recommendations.

L. Final Assessment Report

- 1. After examining all materials submitted by the department/centre, Dean(s), and the appropriate Senate Committee (UPC or SCGS). ARC shall prepare a Final Assessment Report. This report will:
 - a) identify the significant strengths of the program;
 - b) identify opportunities for program improvement and enhancement;
 - c) set out and prioritize the recommendations that are selected for implementation;
 - d) identify and explain the circumstances relating to any recommendations that will not be implemented;
 - e) include an Implementation Plan that identifies:
 - i) who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the Final Assessment Report;
 - ii) who will be responsible for providing any resources made necessary by those recommendations;
 - iii) who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations; and
 - iv) the timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.
- 2. The Final Assessment Report (excluding confidential information) shall be submitted to Senate for consideration.

M. Quality Council Submission

After approval of the Final Assessment Report by Senate, the Reviews Office will submit all required documentation to the Quality Council.

N. Publication of Results

Following approval of the Final Assessment Report by Senate, the Reviews Office will post it on the Vice President, Academic website.

O. Monitoring of Review Results

- 1. Within four years of the date of Senate approval of the Final Assessment Report, the unit will submit to ARC a report on the implementation of the various recommendations noted in the Final Assessment Report.
- 2. Subsequently, ARC will report to Senate on the progress of the implementation of the Review recommendations and will post the unit's implementation monitoring report on the Vice President, Academic's website.

P. Report to Board of Trustees

The Provost and Vice-President, Academic shall report annually to the Board of Trustees the results of all program reviews.

III. NEW PROGRAM REVIEWS

A. General Framework

- 1) All new programs will be subject to an academic assessment prior to being offered.
- 2) For the identification of "new programs", see the definitions above.
- 3) ARC shall oversee these reviews. The Terms of Reference and composition of ARC are set out in Faculty Handbook II: 9.13.(see: http://www.brocku.ca/university-secretariat/facultyhandbook/section2#_genIndex49
- 4) The review of new programs shall be carried out under the general supervision of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and the appropriate Deans. For undergraduate programs, the appropriate Dean(s) shall be the Dean(s) of the Faculty within which the academic unit resides. For graduate programs, the appropriate Deans shall be both the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Dean(s) of the relevant Faculty or Faculties.

B) Timeline

- October 1: Deadline for the Submission of Statement of Intent to ARC. ARC responds within four weeks of the submission of a Statement of Intent.
 Approved Statements of Intent will expire after 24 months if a Program Proposal Brief is not received.
- <u>February/March:</u> Unit submits a Program Proposal Brief to ARC for consideration.
- March/April: External Review of Proposed Program
- <u>May/June</u>: Submission of Reviewers Report and Revised Program Proposal Brief to ARC
- <u>May/August</u>: ARC reports to Senate and sends Final Proposal Brief to Quality Council
- September/October: Preparation of Calendar copy.

C) Process Summary

- Department/Centre/Program prepares a Statement of Intent and submits it to ARC.
- ARC determines whether the program meets the appropriate criteria and whether resources will be found to mount the program.

- If the Statement of Intent is approved by ARC, the Department/Centre/ Program prepares a Draft Program Proposal Brief and submits the Brief to ARC. At the same time, the unit submits a list of proposed reviewers (at least four potential external reviewers) to the Reviews Office, along with a brief profile of each nominee.
- ARC approves or requests changes to the Brief and the Provost selects reviewers.
- Program Proposal Brief is sent to UPC or SGSC for comment.
- Reviews Office contacts selected reviewers in rank order and begins to organize site visits. Program Proposal Brief is sent to Reviewers.
- Reviews Office sets up schedule for site visit, with all reviewers attending at same time.
- Reviewers submit their report to the Reviews Office within four weeks of site visit. Copies sent to Dean(s), Department/Centre, and UPC or SGSC.
- Unit responds to ARC re: the Reviewers' Report, as does UPC or SGSC. Subsequently, the Dean(s) submit a response to ARC.
- Unit, in consultation with the Dean, submits a Revised Program Proposal Brief to ARC.
- ARC considers the Revised Program Proposal in the context of the Reviewers' Report and the responses from the unit and UPC or SGSC, with input from the relevant Dean(s).
- If further changes are required, the unit will submit a Final Program Proposal Brief to ARC.
- ARC reports to Senate on the Final Program Proposal Brief and seeks Senate approval to go forward to the Quality Council for final approval.
- ARC forwards the Final Program Proposal Brief, together with supporting documentation, to the Quality Council. At this point, Brock may announce its intention to offer the program, provided that clear indication is given that approval by the Quality Council is pending and that no offers of admission will be made until and unless the program is approved by the Council.
- Subsequent to receiving the Quality Council's response, ARC reports to the Undergraduate Program Committee or Senate Graduate Studies Committee, which will review the new program's calendar copy and bring the final calendar copy forward to Senate for final institutional approval for commencement of the program.

D) Statement of Intent

- 1) Any unit or group of units intending to introduce a new program must first submit a Statement of Intent to ARC and receive approval to proceed to the next step (preparation of a Program Proposal Brief).
- 2) A Statement of Intent shall include:

- (a) a brief description of the program, including a rationale for the degree nomenclature;
- (b) details of the existing and new resources required to mount the program;
- (c) an explanation as to how the program fits with the University's academic plan;
- (d) evidence of consultation with all academic units affected;
- (e) evidence of student demand and societal need;
- (f) certification from the relevant Dean(s) that the new degree/major is an appropriate and desirable addition to the academic program of the University. For new undergraduate programs, the relevant Dean(s) shall be the Dean(s) of the Faculty within which the program will reside. For new graduate programs, the appropriate Deans shall be both the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Dean(s) of the relevant Faculty or Faculties; and
- (g) any participating department(s)/centre(s) must provide evidence indicating the extent to which they are prepared to contribute (see Manual).
- 3) The deadline for the submission of a Statement of Intent shall be October 1st (for programs intended to commence the following September). Statements of Intent can be submitted at any time.
- 4) ARC shall provide a response to any Statement of Intent within four weeks of its submission to the ARC.

E) Evaluation Criteria

If the Statement of Intent is approved by ARC, the unit(s) shall prepare (by February 1st for programs intended to commence the following September) a Program Proposal Brief which will address the following criteria:

1) Objectives

- (a) Consistency of the program with the institution's mission and academic plans.
- (b) Clarity and appropriateness of the program's requirements and associated learning outcomes in addressing the institution's undergraduate or graduate Degree Level Expectations.
- (c) Appropriateness of degree nomenclature.

2) Admission requirements

- (a) Appropriateness of the program's admission requirements for the learning outcomes established for completion of the program.
- (b) Sufficient explanation of alternative requirements, if any, for admission into a graduate, second-entry or undergraduate program, such as minimum grade point average, additional languages requirements or portfolios,

along with how the program assesses and recognizes prior work or learning experience.

3) Structure

- (a) Appropriateness of the program's structure and regulations to meet specified program learning outcomes and degree level expectations.
- (b) For graduate programs, a clear rationale for program length that ensures that the program requirements can be reasonably completed within the proposed time period.

4) Program content

- (a) Ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study.
- (b) Identification of any unique curriculum or program innovations or creative components.
- (c) For research-focused graduate programs, clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion.
- (d) Evidence that each graduate student in the program is required to take a minimum of two-thirds of the course requirements from among graduate level courses (see Manual).

5) Mode(s) of delivery

The appropriateness of the proposed mode(s) of delivery in meeting the program's intended learning outcomes and Degree Level Expectations.

6) Assessment of teaching and learning

- (a) Appropriateness of the proposed methods for the assessment of student achievement of the intended program learning outcomes and Degree Level Expectations.
- (b) Completeness of plans for documenting and demonstrating the level of performance of students, consistent with the institution's statement of its Degree Level Expectations.

7) Student Demand

Evidence that there is a demand for the new degree/program on the part of potential students. This may include projected enrolment levels (and the bases for those projections), application statistics, projected origins of student demand (e.g., domestic or international), and the duration of the projected demand.

8) Societal Need

Evidence that there is a need for graduates of the proposed degree/major on the part of society. This may include the probable availability of positions upon graduation (e.g., by letters from potential employers or governmental agencies). In the case of professional programs, their congruence with the regulatory requirements of the profession must be assessed.

9) Resources for all programs

- (a) Adequacy of the administrative unit's planned utilization of existing human, physical and financial resources, and any institutional commitment to supplement those resources, to support the program.
- (b) Participation of a sufficient number and quality of faculty who are competent to teach and/or supervise in the program.
- (c) Evidence that there are adequate resources to sustain the quality of scholarship produced by undergraduate students as well as graduate students' scholarship and research activities, including library support, information technology support, and laboratory access.

10) Resources for graduate programs only

- (a) Evidence that faculty have the current and relevant research or professional/clinical expertise needed to sustain the program, promote innovation and foster an appropriate intellectual climate.
- (b) Where appropriate to the program, evidence that financial assistance for students will be sufficient to ensure adequate quality and numbers of students.
- (c) Evidence of how supervisory loads will be distributed, and the qualifications and appointment status of faculty who will provide instruction and supervision.

11) Resources for undergraduate programs only

Evidence of and planning for adequate numbers and quality of:

- (a) faculty and staff to achieve the goals of the program; or
- (b) plans and the commitment to provide the necessary resources in step with the implementation of the program;
- (c) planned/anticipated class sizes;
- (d) provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities (if required); and
- (e) the role of adjunct and part-time faculty.

12) Quality and other indicators

- (a) Definition and use of indicators that provide evidence of quality of the faculty (e.g., qualifications, research, innovation and scholarly record; appropriateness of collective faculty expertise to contribute substantively to the proposed program).
- (b) Evidence of a program structure and faculty research that will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience.

F) Program Proposal Brief

- 1) If the Statement of Intent is approved by ARC, the unit(s) shall prepare (by February 1st for programs intended to commence the following September) a Program Proposal Brief.
- 2) The academic unit shall submit the Program Proposal Brief to the Academic Review Committee. After consideration, the Committee shall either approve the Brief or advise the unit of revisions to be made for re-submission.
- 3) The Brief will be treated as confidential to the relevant Dean(s), the reviewers and ARC.

G) Reviewers

- 1) When a Program Proposal Brief is approved by ARC, a Review Committee will be identified. It is expected that the external review of the proposed new program will occur no later than March/April (for programs intended to commence the following September).
- 2) The Review Committee shall normally consist of at least:
 - (i) one external reviewer for a new undergraduate program; and
 - (ii) two such reviewers for new graduate programs, at least one of whom will be from outside Ontario.

Additional discretionary members may be assigned to the Review Committee where ARC so decides. Such additional members might be appropriately qualified and experienced people selected from industry or the professions.

- 3) Reviewers shall be at "arm's length" from the program and to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, the reviewers should not:
 - (a) be a close friend or relative of a member of the unit undergoing the review;
 - (b) have been a research supervisor of a member of the unit, within the past six years:
 - (c) have been a graduate student of a member of the unit within the past six years;
 - (d) have collaborated with a member of the unit within the past six years or have plans to collaborate with them in the immediate future; or
 - (e) have been a visiting scholar/teacher in the unit in the past six years,
- 4) Full disclosure of all past affiliation(s) is required to assist in the selection and to ensure an "arm's length" relationship. The reviewers will normally be

- associate or full professors, or the equivalent, with program management experience.
- 5) The external review of a new graduate program proposal must incorporate an on-site visit. The external review of a new undergraduate program proposal will normally be conducted on site.

H) List of Interviewees

Prior to the completion of Brief, the academic unit shall prepare a list for the Reviews Office of those to be interviewed by the reviewers. Interviewees shall include:

- (i) the Provost and Vice-President, Academic;
- (ii) the relevant Dean(s);
- (iii) all faculty to be associated with the proposed program (including cross-appointed and limited term faculty, if appropriate);
- (iv) administrative staff to be associated with the program;
- (v) a representative sample of students who might be associated with the program;
- (vi) representatives of the Library;
- (vii) faculty from cognate disciplines, and
- (viii) others as deemed appropriate.

I) Site Visit and Report

- 1) The Reviews Office shall forward the approved Brief and any related materials to the reviewers.
- 2) The Reviews Office, in consultation with the academic unit and the relevant Dean(s), shall establish a time frame for the review.
- 3) The reviewers shall conduct an on-site visit, preferably at the same time. The length of the on-site visit normally will be two days, with a portion of the second day allocated to preliminary preparation of their report.
- 4) The reviewers will normally provide a joint report that appraises the standards and quality of the proposed program and addresses the criteria set out in Section III.E above, including the associated faculty and material resources. They will also be invited to acknowledge any clearly innovative aspects of the proposed program together with recommendations on any essential or otherwise desirable modifications to it.

- 5) The reviewers shall submit their report to the Reviews Office, normally within four weeks of the site visit. The reviewers' report is a public document. However, if deemed warranted by the reviewers, they may submit recommendations and/or comments relating to personnel issues or other matters specifically involving individuals, that will be treated as confidential to the Dean, academic unit, and ARC.
- 6) The report should be organized according to the criteria listed in Section III.E above, with particular attention to learning objectives, modes of delivery, and suggested improvements to the program.
- 7) The Reviews Office will distribute copies of the Reviewers Report to:
 - (i) the relevant Dean(s);
 - (ii) the academic unit;
 - (iii) the Academic Reviews Committee; and
 - (iv) either the Senate Undergraduate Program Committee (for undergraduate programs) or the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (for graduate programs).

J) Academic Unit Response

- 1) The academic unit shall develop a response, normally within four weeks of receiving the report, to the comments, observations and recommendations contained in the Reviewers Report and shall submit that response to ARC.
- 2) The unit response will be treated as a public document. However, if the reviewers have submitted confidential comments (as per 5 above), the unit response, if any, to those comments will be treated as confidential to the Dean(s) and the Academic Review Committee.

K) UPC/SGSC Response

The UPC or SGSC shall be invited to provide comment on any of the comments, observations and recommendations contained in the Reviewers' Report and shall submit any such comments to ARC.

L) Decanal Response

After consultation with the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and the academic unit, the relevant Dean(s) shall submit to ARC his/her/their responses to:

(i) the recommendations advanced by the Reviewers; and the unit's response to the Reviewers' Report; and will describe:

- (ii) any changes in organization, policy or governance that would be necessary to meet the recommendations;
- (iii) the resources, financial and otherwise, that would be provided in supporting the implementation of selected recommendations; and
- (iv) a proposed timeline for the implementation of any of those recommendations.

M) Assessment

- 1) After examining all materials submitted by the department/centre, Dean(s), and the appropriate Senate Committee (UPC or SCGS), ARC shall recommend (to Senate) either:
 - (a) that the proposal meets the University's quality assurance standards and should be submitted to the Quality Council for approval; or
 - (b) that the proposal requires further modification.
- 2) In the event of 1.a), following approval by Senate, the Reviews Office will submit all appropriate documentation to the Quality Council.

N) Publication of Results

Following approval of the proposal by Senate, the Reviews Office will post the Proposal Brief (including an executive summary) on the Vice-President, Academic website.

O) Report to Board of Trustees

The Provost and Vice-President, Academic shall report annually to the Board of Trustees on all new programs approved by Senate and the Quality Council during the preceding year.

P) Subsequent Processes

- 1) After a new program is approved (by both the Quality Council and Senate) to commence, the program must begin within twenty-four months of the date of Senate approval.
- 2) At the end of four years of operation, a new program must submit to ARC a progress report reflecting its Program Proposal Brief as approved by Senate and the Quality Council.
- 3) The first cyclical review for any new program will occur no later than eight years of the date of the program's initial enrolment in accordance with the University's academic review schedule.

IV) MODIFICATIONS TO EXISTING PROGRAMS

A) Statement of Intent

- 1) Any unit or group of units intending to propose major modification(s) to an existing program must first submit a Statement of Intent to ARC. Also, should UPC or SCGS determine that a proposal received as part of the Calendar construction process constitutes a major modification, it shall refer that proposal to ARC for its consideration.
- 2) A Statement of Intent will reference the evaluation criteria for new programs (see Section III.E above) as appropriate and shall include:
 - (a) a brief description of the changes to the program;
 - (b) a pedagogical rationale for the changes being proposed;
 - (c) details of the resource implications (if any) of the changes;
 - (d) an explanation as to how the revised program would fit with the University's academic plan;
 - (e) evidence of consultation with all affected academic units; and
 - (f) certification from the relevant Dean(s) that the proposed changes are appropriate and desirable revisions to the academic program of the University. For undergraduate programs, the relevant Dean(s) shall be the Dean(s) of the Faculty within which the program resides. For graduate programs, the appropriate Deans shall be both the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Dean(s) of the relevant Faculty or Faculties.
- 3) A Statement of Intent can be submitted at any time. However, departments/centres should be aware of internal University Calendar deadlines.
- 4) ARC shall provide a response to the unit within four weeks of receipt of a submission to ARC. The Committee shall either approve the Statement or advise the unit of revisions to be made for re-submission.

B) Assessment

- 1) After examining all materials submitted by the department/centre, and attending to the evaluation criteria for new programs (III.E.), ARC shall recommend (to Senate) either:
 - (a) that the proposal meets the University's quality assurance standards; or
 - (b) that the proposal requires further modification.
- 2) In the event of 1.a), final approval will be approval by Senate.

V. REVIEWS OF JOINT PROGRAMS

For programs offered jointly with another/other Ontario universities, the procedure is that:

- one individual (normally the Director or equivalent of the joint program) will prepare a Self Study following the template of his/her university, in consultation with faculty, staff and students at the other institution(s).
- The review team will be chosen in consultation with both/all partners, and the "internal" reviewer can come from each partner institution, or be chosen to represent all partners.
- The review visit will include both/all campuses.
- The response to the review can be written by the Director of the joint program in consultation with the appropriate Chairs and Deans at both/all participating institutions, and then sent through the regular process at both/all universities.
- If deemed more appropriate, separate responses could be prepared, one for each participating institution, to follow the normal process at each university.
- For programs joint with other universities outside Ontario, Brock will follow the review process for Ontario universities.
- This would not necessarily require a site visit to the other university, provided that the Quality Council has determined that the partner university is also subject to an appropriate quality review process in its own jurisdiction.
- However Brock would obtain information about the components of the program completed outside Ontario as appropriate, and include this in the review within Ontario.
- In the case of partnerships to offer degree or diploma programs conjointly with other kinds of post-secondary institutions such as colleges or institutes, Brock will take the lead in the review process and the principles enshrined herein will pertain as relevant.