

**Brock University**

# **Institutional Quality Assurance Processes**

**Version 5**  
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**Quality Assurance Planning Committee**

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## **A. INTERNAL FRAMEWORK**

1. 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).
2. 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").

## **B. CYCLICAL REVIEWS PROCESS**

1. Timeline for the preparation of reviews:
  - December: ARC will confirm units to be reviewed in the coming year.
  - January-February: Orientation sessions for departments/ programs with upcoming reviews.
  - January- February: 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.
  - July-October: Reviews Office forwards additional data as available and administers student surveys for reviews that are pending.
  - October 1<sup>st</sup>: units forward proposed reviewers to ARC for discussion and finalization.
  - Mid-November: November 1st count date information made available to units for reviews.
  - November-December: Reviews Office sends survey data to units.
  - January 1-8: Submission of briefs to ARC; Reviews Office begins to schedule and make arrangements for reviews.
2. Process for Cyclical Reviews (Overseen by ARC)
  - Schedule of program reviews for upcoming academic year is presented to Senate (January)
  - Department/Centre/Program prepares its self-study document [SEE GUIDE] and submits self-study and list of proposed reviewers (at least 4 external reviewers and 2 internal reviewers) to ARC, along with a brief profile of each nominee [SEE GUIDE].

- ARC approves or requests changes to self-study document and selects reviewers, ranking preferences within each category (external and internal).
- ARC sends ranked list of approved reviewers to Reviews Office, which contacts selected reviewers in rank order and begins to organize site visits.
- Reviews Office sets up schedule for site visit, 2 days in length, with all reviewers attending at same time.
- Reviewers submit their report to ARC within 4 weeks of site visit.
- Unit responds to ARC re: the Reviewers' Report, as does UPC or SGSC.
- ARC considers Reviewers' Report and response from UPC or SGSC, with input from the relevant Dean or Deans, who join ARC for this discussion.
- ARC develops the Final Assessment Report, including an Executive Summary, Implementation Plan, and Monitoring Plan.
- ARC distributes the Final Assessment Report to the Program or Department, Senate and the Quality Council.
- The Executive Summary and Implementation Plan are posted on the Brock web site.

### **C. NEW PROGRAMS REVIEW PROCESS**

1. Timeline for the submission of proposals for new programs:
  - 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.
  - February/March: Unit submits final proposal to ARC for approval.
  - March/April: External Review of Proposed Program
  - May/June: Submission of Final Program Proposal Brief, Reviewers Report, and ARC Report
  - May/August: ARC produces final report and sends to Quality Council
  - September/October: Preparation of Calendar copy.
2. Process for New Programs Review Process (Overseen by ARC)
  - Department/Centre/Program prepares a Statement of Intent and submits it to ARC [see GUIDE]. 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 [see GUIDE] and submits the Brief and a list of proposed reviewers (at least 4 potential external reviewers) to ARC, along with a brief profile of each nominee [see GUIDE]
  - ARC approves or requests changes to the Brief and selects reviewers, ranking preferences.

- Program Proposal Brief is sent to UPC or SGSC for comment.
- ARC sends ranked list of approved reviewers to Reviews Office, which 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 ARC within 4 weeks of site visit. Copies sent to Dean(s), Department/Centre, and UPC/SGSC.
- Unit responds to ARC re: the Reviewers' Report, as does UPC or SGSC.
- ARC considers Reviewers' Report and responses from the department/unit and UPC or SGSC, with input from the relevant Dean(s), who join ARC for this discussion.
- ARC reports to Senate on recommendation re: Program Proposal Brief and seeks Senate approval for those it is recommending 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.

## **Cyclical Reviews Guide**

### **A. General Outline**

1. Programs in the University will be subject to an academic review on a periodic basis so 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 applicable, 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 offered by Brock University. The review policy also recognizes that every program is the responsibility of one or more academic units.
3. For those units that are subject to regular accreditation reviews, those reviews will normally be considered as fulfilling most of the requirements of the Academic Program Review Policy. 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 by the appropriate accreditation process. In cases where there are discrepancies/differences, ARC may require the submission of additional information.

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.
4. ARC shall oversee academic reviews. The Terms of Reference and composition of ARC are set out in Faculty Handbook II: 9.13.

5. Academic Reviews shall be carried out under the general supervision of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and the appropriate Deans. For undergraduate reviews, the appropriate Dean(s) shall be the Dean(s) of the Faculty 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. 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 31<sup>st</sup> annually the programs to be reviewed during the following academic year and shall present that information to the January meeting of Senate.
3. Annually in January-February, the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic 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. These data shall normally include:
  - a) for the review of undergraduate programs:
    - i) Enrolment
      - Degrees Granted (by program)
      - Full-Time Equivalents (F/W, SP/SU, Total)
      - Majors (by program)
    - ii) Admissions
      - Admission Targets and Registrations
      - Applications 101 vs. 105 trends
      - Admission Averages: Distribution
      - Admission Averages: Comparisons

iii) Other

Average Grades Comparisons  
NSSE Seniors Results  
Retention and Graduation Rates

iv) Survey Results

Current Majors Survey (excludes Year I)  
Recent Graduates Survey (five years, slipped one year)

b) for the review of graduate programs:

i) Enrolment

Degrees Granted (by program)  
Student Enrolment (Headcounts and FTEs)

ii) External Operating Research Funding

Operating Research Funding by Source and Year  
Total External Operating Funding by Field

iii) Graduate Supervision

Completed and Current Numbers of Thesis Supervisions by  
Faculty Member

iv) Faculty Teaching Assignments

Faculty Teaching Assignments for the Three Years Preceding the  
Review

v) Financial Support of Graduate Students

Financial Support for Masters Students  
(for each of the previous eight years)  
Financial Support for Doctoral Students  
(for each of the previous eight years)

vi) Courses Offered in Past Three Years

Courses Offered to Graduate Students in the Three Years  
Preceding the Review

vii) Cohort Data

Masters Students:

- a) New Enrolment, Completions, Transfers and Withdrawals  
by Year of Admission
- b) New Enrolment, Student Complement, Withdrawals  
Transfers and Completions by Academic Year

Doctoral Students:

- a) New Enrolment, Completions, and Withdrawals by Year of Admission
- b) New Enrolment, Student Complement, Withdrawals and Completions by Academic Year

viii) Admissions, Projected Intake and Enrolments

- a) Admissions data for the preceding five years.
- b) Projected Intake and Enrolments for the next eight years

ix) Survey Results

Current Students Survey

Recent Graduates Survey (five years, slipped one year)

- 5. By March 1<sup>st</sup>, the academic unit shall establish a committee to document its self study. The composition the Committee shall be reported to the Academic Review Office.

**C. The Self Study Document**

- 1. The Self Study provides an opportunity to assess all the dimensions of academic quality. It must be broad-based, reflective, forward-looking and include critical analysis. Participation of program faculty, staff, and students in the self-study must be documented and how their views were obtained and taken into account. This committee may also, where appropriate, seek the advice of others such as representatives of industry, professions and practical training programs.
- 2. The Self Study shall include the following:
  - a) the background and history of the program and the academic unit responsible for the program (summarized as a context for the delivery of the program);
  - b) a summary of the most immediate past review and the results/impact of that review;
  - c) a description of the program's learning outcomes, their consistency with the institution's and the Faculty's mission and degree-level expectations, and an explanation of the ways in which the unit assesses the extent to which its graduates have achieved those outcomes. This would include a description of the methods used for the assessment of student achievement of the intended program learning outcomes and degree level expectations and how the program documents and demonstrates the level of

performance of students, consistent with the institution's statement of its degree level expectations.

Note: The curricular content, admission requirements, mode of delivery, bases of evaluation of student performance, commitment of resources and overall quality of any academic program and its courses are all related to its goals, learning objectives and learning outcomes. Goals provide an overview for students, instructors and program/course evaluators of what the program or course aims to accomplish. Learning objectives are an expression of what it is intended the student should have learned or achieved by the end of the program or course. Learning outcomes demonstrate what the student has actually learned or achieved in the program or course. This review policy is designed to meet the Quality Council's requirements and to foster continuous quality improvement in Brock University and its programs.

NOTE: See the OCAV Statement on Undergraduate Degree Learning Expectations (UDLEs) and Graduate Degree Learning Expectations (GDLEs) at [www.Brocku.ca/xxxxxx](http://www.Brocku.ca/xxxxxx).

- d) an assessment of the past, present and projected future enrolment in the program, including majors and Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), based upon data drawn from the University's Student Record System;
- e) an assessment of admissions requirements, including an evaluation of:
  - a) admission requirements and qualifications of incoming students;
  - b) enrolment targets and numbers of students registered;
  - c) enrolment patterns with respect to numbers of 101 and 105 entrants, transfer students, and/or other categories relevant to the program in the case of undergraduate reviews; for graduate reviews, information about applicant pool, offers made, acceptances and student registration numbers, as well as indication of breakdown re: domestic and international enrolments;
- f) an outline of the program's structure, curriculum, and delivery modes, including:
  - a) the curriculum as presented in the calendar, incorporating course titles and hours;
  - b) for undergraduate programs, major options/streams, if applicable; for graduate programs fields within the program; and
  - c) the identification of any courses that are not offered on a regularly accessible basis;

- g) a summary of how each course contributes to achieving the goals and learning objectives of the program. This may include
  - a) subject matter, modes of delivery and pedagogical methods;
  - b) usual class size and total course enrolment;
  - c) course outlines, as an appendix; and
  - d) procedures to evaluate and address course and instructional quality;
- h) an assessment of retention and graduation rates;
- i) for undergraduate programs, the structure, content, and objectives/focus of the program relative to its comparators in universities in and outside Ontario. The choice of comparators shall be explained. Similarities to, and differences from, a selection of these shall be described and explained. Collaborative arrangements should be identified;
- j) an assessment of faculty resources, including:
  - a) full and part-time instructional resources;
  - b) a summary of the faculty associated with the program;
  - c) the curriculum vitae of each faculty member in the program, and of all other faculty who have recently taught required courses to students of the program, to be included as an appendix. The curriculum vitae format should be standard within each program, and generally consistent with recognized academic/disciplinary models;
  - d) for graduate programs, a report relating faculty researchers to the designated fields of the program;
  - e) for graduate programs, a list of faculty supervisions, both completed and in process, including the year of start of each supervision and year in which supervision was completed or is expected to be completed; and
  - f) for graduate programs, times to completion for all student cohorts since the last review;
- k) an outline of the unit's operating budget for the previous four years along with an evaluation of other resources available to the program. This will include a summary description of space, computing facilities, library resources, equipment and other categories, as appropriate. This section should also include an evaluation of academic services that directly contribute to the academic quality of each program under review;
- l) an assessment of:
  - a) the results of representative surveys (conducted by the Reviews Office) of the perceptions of current majors and recent graduates of

- the program's effectiveness in preparing them for careers and/or graduate studies;
    - b) the results of surveys/consultations with representatives of industry, professions or practical training programs, where appropriate; and
    - c) for graduate programs, information on the placement of students after graduation, to the extent possible;
  - m) a self assessment of the program's strengths, weaknesses, and level of success in meeting its stated objectives. An inventory of criteria, performance indicators, and evaluative tools employed by the program as a basis for its self-assessment shall be provided; and
  - n) the program's strategic plan, or a summary thereof, for the next three to five years. It should include program priorities and at least a preliminary response to weaknesses identified through the Self Study, areas that hold promise for enhancement, and concerns and recommendations that arose in previous reviews.
- 3. The academic unit shall submit the Self Study to the Dean(s) for review. When the Dean(s) is/are satisfied that the Self Study is complete and accurate, the document will be submitted to ARC. After consideration, the Committee shall either approve the Self Study or advise the unit and Dean(s) of revisions to be made for re-submission. The Self Study will be treated as confidential to the relevant Dean(s), the reviewers and ARC.

#### **D. 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;
  - b) two such reviewers for reviews of graduate programs, at least one of whom will be from outside Ontario;
  - c) two such reviewers for the concurrent review of an undergraduate and graduate program (one from outside Ontario); plus
  - d) 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 an "arm's length" relationship) 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 provides. 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 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. By October 1<sup>st</sup>, the academic unit shall develop a list of at least four potential external and two potential internal reviewers from which the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, in consultation with the Dean(s), shall make the final selection.

**E. List of those to be Interviewed by the Reviewers**

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) a representative sample of students associated with the program (with no faculty present);
- e) representatives of the Library;
- f) faculty from cognate disciplines,
- g) for units with Coop programs, representatives of the Coop Office; and
- h) others as deemed appropriate.

**F. Site Visit and Report**

1. The Reviews Office shall forward the approved Self Study and any related materials to the reviewers.
2. The Reviews Office, in consultation with the academic unit and the relevant Dean(s), shall establish guidelines for the reviewers.
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 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 under review as follows:

Good Quality with National Prominence (A)	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 (B)	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 (C)	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 B. There will be a commitment to maintain program strength.
Poor Quality (D)	The program has fundamental deficiencies that must be addressed. A concrete, realistic action plan must be implemented within a specified

	timeframe. The program may be subject to a subsequent review earlier than the normal cycle. If there is no improvement, the program will be considered for closure.
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 B. 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. While the reviewers' report will not be treated as a public document, any and all recommendations shall be treated as public information. Also, if deemed warranted by the reviewers, they may submit recommendations and/or comments relating to personnel issues or other matters specifically involving individuals. These will be treated as confidential to the Dean(s), academic unit, either UPC or SCGS, and ARC.

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?
  - f) Outcome Category Recommendation.
  - g) 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).

## **G. Comments/Responses**

1. Academic Unit Response
  - a) The academic unit shall develop a response, normally within three weeks of receiving the report, to the comments, observations and recommendations contained in the Reviewers' Report and shall submit that response to ARC.
  - b) The unit response will be treated as a public document. However, if the reviewers have submitted confidential comments (as per 6 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 any of the comments, observations and recommendations contained in 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.

## **H. 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 Executive Summary (for publication on the web); and
  - f) 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.

**I. Quality Council Submission**

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

**J. Publication of Results**

Following approval of the Final Assessment Report by Senate, the Reviews Office will post the following on the appropriate website:

- a) the Executive Summary; and
- b) the Implementation Plan.

**K. Monitoring of Review Results**

Within four years of the date of Senate approval, the Academic Review Committee will submit to Senate a report on the implementation of the Review recommendations.

**L. Report to Board of Trustees**

The Provost and Vice-President, Academic shall report annually to the Board of Trustees on the results of all program reviews. This report shall include copies of the Executive Summary for each review concluded during the previous year.

## NEW PROGRAM PROPOSALS GUIDE

### A. 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).

For present purposes, a new program is defined as a new degree designation (e.g., Bachelor of Infomatics) or a new major title within an existing degree (e.g., Bachelor of Science in Infomatics).

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 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 affected academic units; and
  - e) 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.
3. The deadline for the submission of a Statement of Intent shall be October 1<sup>st</sup> (for programs intended to commence the following September). Statements of Intent can be submitted at any time.
4. The ARC shall provide a response to any Statement of Intent within four weeks of its submission to the ARC.

### B. Program Proposal Brief

1. If the Statement of Intent is approved by ARC, the unit(s) shall prepare (by February 1<sup>st</sup> for programs intended to commence the following September) a Program Proposal Brief which shall include the following:
  - a) **Objectives**
    - i) An explanation of the program's consistency with Brock's mission and academic plans.

- ii) A description of the appropriateness of the program's requirements and associated learning outcomes in addressing Brock's undergraduate/graduate degree level expectations.
  - iii) A description of the appropriateness of degree nomenclature including an explanation for the name of the degree and/or major.
  - iv) If the proposed degree/major has duplicative similarities to existing programs in Ontario or Canada, reasons for such duplication.
- b) 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.
- c) 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). This may also include evidence of the need for the furthering of knowledge, the enhancement of culture, and the encouragement of diversity and tolerance within society. In the case of professional programs, their congruence with the regulatory requirements of the profession must be assessed.
- d) Admission Requirements**
- i) The program's admission requirements for the learning outcomes established for completion of the program.
  - ii) An explanation of alternative requirements, if any, for admission into a graduate, second-entry or undergraduate program, such as minimum grade point average, additional languages or portfolios, along with how the program recognizes prior work or learning experience.
- e) Program Structure**
- i) A detailed description of the proposed degree/major and the proposed Calendar Entry. This should include an outline of how the program is designed, structured and will be delivered so that graduates may demonstrate achievement, in ways appropriate to the values, priorities and ambitions of Brock University.
  - ii) A description of how the program's structure and regulations meet specified program learning outcomes in relation to its degree level expectations.

- iii) For graduate programs, a clear rationale for program length that ensures that the program requirements can be reasonably completed within the proposed time period.

NOTE: See the OCAV Statement on Undergraduate Degree Learning Expectations (UDLEs) and Graduate Degree Learning Expectations (GDLEs) at [www.Brocku.ca/xxxxxx](http://www.Brocku.ca/xxxxxx).

**f) Program Content**

- i) A description of the ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study.
- ii) Identification of any unique curriculum or program innovations or creative components.
- iii) For research-focused graduate programs, a clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion.
- iv) 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 (i.e. courses exclusively numbered at the 500 level or above).

**g) Mode of Delivery**

A description of the proposed mode(s) of delivery to meet the intended program learning outcomes and degree level expectations.

**h) Assessment of teaching and learning**

- i) The proposed methods for the assessment of student achievement of the intended program learning outcomes and degree level expectations.
- ii) Plans for documenting and demonstrating the level of performance of students, consistent with the institution's statement of its degree level expectations.

**i) Resources for all programs**

- i) 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.
- ii) A description of the number and quality of faculty who are competent to teach and/or supervise in the program
- iii) 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.

- iv) Where appropriate, the availability of support staff and of teaching and laboratory assistants should be indicated.
- v) The Costing of New or Significantly Revised Programs form (LINK TO FORM) must be included as part of the Brief.

**j) Resources for graduate programs only**

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

**k) Resources for undergraduate programs only**

Evidence of and planning for adequate numbers and quality of:

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

**l) Library Resources**

A report from the University Librarian on the adequacy of the Library resources available to support the program.

**m) Information Technology**

If significant IT resources will be required to offer the new degree/major, a report from the Executive Director of ITS on the adequacy of the ITS resources available to support the program.

**n) Quality and other indicators**

- i) 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).

ii) Evidence of a program structure and faculty research that will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience

**o) Academic Integration**

An evaluation of the probability that graduates of the proposed program will be strategically advantaged to pursue successful subsequent (second, third or professional cycle etc.,) programs, whether at Brock or other institutions of higher learning and/or research both in our region and nationally/internationally.

**p) Decanal/Co-operating Department(s)/Centre(s)**

The Dean(s) of the appropriate Faculty(ies) must certify that the new degree/major is an appropriate and desirable addition to the academic program of the Faculty and any co-operating department(s)/centre(s) must certify that they are prepared to participate in the offering of the new degree/major.

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.

**C. 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 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, but may be conducted by video-conference or an equivalent method if the external reviewer is satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable.

**D. List of those to be Interviewed by the Reviewers**

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) a representative sample of students who might be associated with the program;
- v) representatives of the Library;
- vi) faculty from cognate disciplines, and
- vii) others as deemed appropriate.

**E. 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 time lines for the reviewers.
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 2.1 of the Quality Assurance Framework, 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 as follows:
  - i) Learning Objectives: Are the learning objectives clear, concise and appropriate?
  - ii) Delivery: Is the program to be delivered in a way that ensures the learning objectives can be met?
  - iii) Recommendations: What changes would improve 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).

## **F. Academic Unit Response**

1. The academic unit shall develop a response, normally within three weeks of receiving the report, to the comments, observations and recommendations contained in the Reviewers Report and shall submit that response to the Academic Review Committee.
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.

**G. 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.

**H. 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.

**I. 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.

**J. Publication of Results**

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

**K. 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. This report shall include copies of the appropriate executive summaries.

## **GUIDE FOR PROPOSALS INVOLVING MAJOR MODIFICATION(S) OF AN EXISTING PROGRAM**

### **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.

For present purposes, major modifications to an existing program will typically include substantial changes to the requirements for the program (e.g., a number of new or altered required courses), significant changes to the program's learning outcomes, and/or significant changes to the list of faculty members engaged in delivering the program. The addition of a new field (or the deletion of an existing field) in a graduate program will also constitute a major modification.

2. A Statement of Intent shall include:
  - a) a brief description of the changes to the program;
  - b) details of the resource implications (if any) of the changes;
  - c) an explanation as to how the revised program would fit with the University's academic plan;
  - d) evidence of consultation with all affected academic units; and
  - e) certification from the relevant Dean(s) that the proposed changes are appropriate and desirable additions 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.
3. The deadline for the submission of a Statement of Intent shall be October 1<sup>st</sup> (for changes intended to take effect the following September). Statements of Intent can be submitted at any time.
4. The ARC shall provide a response to any Statement of Intent within four weeks of its submission to the 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, 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 under that body's protocol for expedited approvals.