



QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK FOR CONTINUOUS ENHANCEMENT

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I. Introduction

The Quality Assurance Framework for Continuous Enhancement demonstrates Camosun's commitment to the provision and development of quality learning experiences for students through the examination of the strengths, challenges, opportunities and accomplishments of the college's credit educational offerings. A wholistic and integrated approach to review and development, the success of the framework and ultimately the quality of Camosun's programs, relies upon relationships between and amongst learners, faculty, education leaders, community, industry and employers. A relational and enabling framework, the experiences and perspectives of Camosun stakeholders and partners are valued and acted upon. These contributions support positive and purposeful action toward the goals of continuous improvement and enhancement of programs, and of students' learning experiences.

As a foundation for program review, the framework assures quality, rigour, and accountability for all credentialed program and credit offerings. Engagement with learners, graduates, community, employers and college personnel throughout a cycle of continuous enhancement provides further assurance that the community Camosun serves is meaningfully involved in determining quality educational programming.

Quality assurance measures described within the framework are transparent and timely, ensuring learners, faculty, administration, and internal and external stakeholders are engaged in a collaborative and intentional process that informs the future direction of a program area.

The quality assurance measures that guide program review processes are evidence-informed, relying upon both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive view of a program.

This framework is guided by Camosun's Program Quality Assurance policy specifically, these principles stated within that policy:

- The college ensures that all of its programs are current, relevant, and of the highest quality through robust and collaborative processes aimed at continuous improvement with peer evaluation as an essential feature.
- The college is committed to conducting cyclical program reviews.
- Program review and program renewal processes are intended to provide a thorough exploration of program quality and effectiveness contributing to positive and purposeful change.
- Program quality assurance may be informed by external accreditation processes.

All British Columbian public post-secondary institutions are required to meet the expectations of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training Degree Quality Assessment Board

(DQAB) and to conduct rigorous, ongoing program and institutional quality assessment. DQAB requirements and those of the Ministry's Quality Assurance Process Audit (QAPA) guidelines are addressed through the *Quality Assurance Framework* and build upon existing college practices for program renewal, and learner, community, professional, industry and alumni engagement and input.

The framework also provides a mechanism for ensuring that credentialed programs and credit offerings are aligned with the college's stated mission, values, and strategic priorities, and the Education Approvals Policy. It is a means of demonstrating accountability to the college community, its stakeholders, the general public, and governing and funding bodies. It also provides guidance for administrative decisions and considers whether the appropriate organizational, human, physical and technological resources are accessible and available to support quality program offerings.

The original framework was published in November 2019 in preparation for the college's first quality assurance process audit (QAPA) and was informed by the work of peer institutions, including Okanagan College, Vancouver Island University, and Vancouver Community College. At that time, the framework included an overview of continuous improvement processes for new program development. A separate document outlining quality assurance for new program development will be published.

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II. Overview of the Quality Assurance Framework for Continuous Enhancement

Program review for quality assurance is a consistent and standardized approach to program monitoring, analysis, renewal, evaluation, and validation with the overall aim of continuous improvement and program enhancement. The Quality Assurance Framework consists of an annual environmental scan, ongoing curriculum development and program renewal, and a scheduled five to seven-year cycle of self-study and external review.

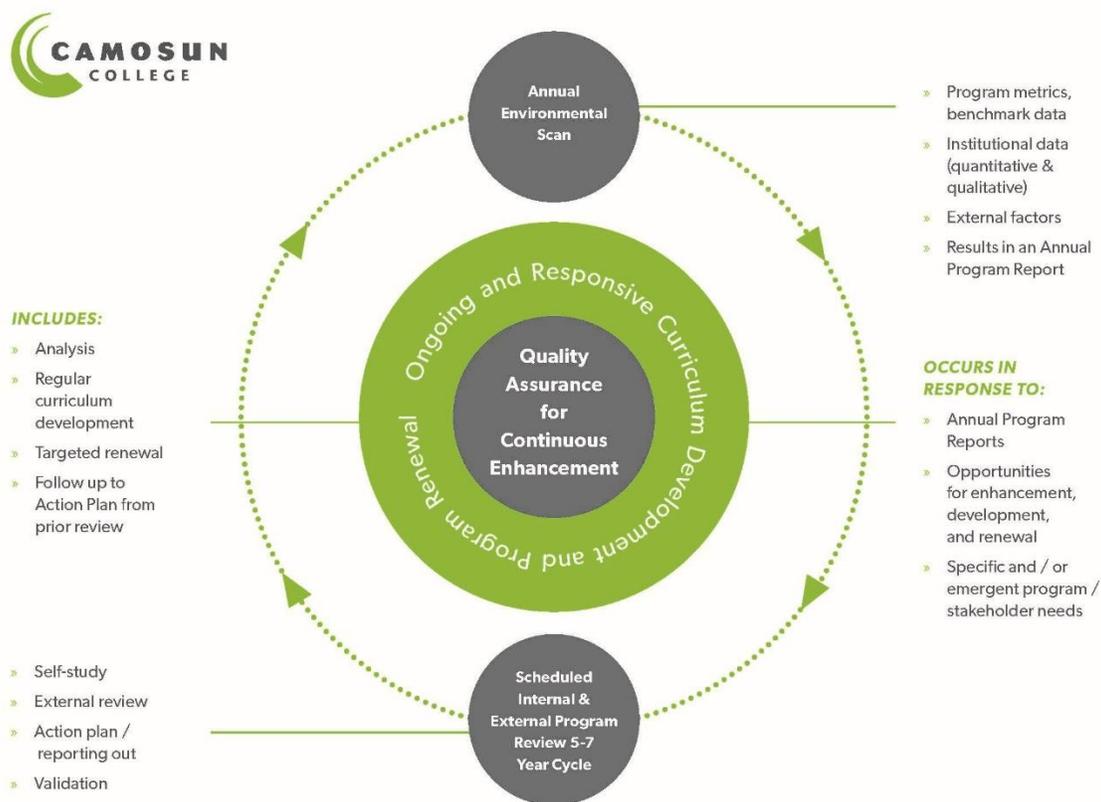


Figure 1 Program Review: A cycle of continuous enhancement

Program review provides learners, college employees and the public with assurance that credentialed programs offered by Camosun meet the rigour and standards expected of exemplary post-secondary institutions in British Columbia.

Program review for quality assurance is designed to be both reflective and analytical. It is a collegial, evidence-informed, and reflective process that results in clear plans of action. Faculty as program or subject matter experts work with college administrators to generate and analyze evidence, create plans for action, and report out to key constituents. Program review also allows for identification of institutional resources critical to the success of a program and its

learners. The assessment of program effectiveness and quality through both an internal and an external lens are key features of program review for quality assurance.

A robust, cyclical, and evidence-driven system of review helps programs to integrate and align with institutional goals such as Indigenization, interculturalization, sustainability, and interdisciplinary and applied learning practices.

The framework for quality assurance considers:

- The quality of programs, including an assessment of learner and stakeholder experiences and student outcomes
- Indicators of feasibility, challenges, and opportunities related to future expectations for the program
- Teaching and learning experiences as evidenced through program and course learning outcomes
- Internal and external resources, supports, and input
- The contribution or importance of the program to other college programs
- External review panel recommendations
- Follow-up actions

Quantitative perspectives on quality include data related to student outcomes, retention, attrition and employment, levels of student, graduate and employer satisfaction, adherence to institutional and academic standards for accountability, and professional competency or accreditation benchmarks.

Qualitative data contributes to quality measures by examining students' learning experiences; the alignment of the program to the college's strategic priorities, mission and values; perceptions and experiences of internal and external stakeholders; as well as customised indicators of quality that are significant to a particular program area. Internal and external engagement and collaboration are also recognized as indicators of quality assurance.

For the purposes of quality assurance, program refers to credentialed program and credit course offerings. Given Camosun's diverse range of educational offerings, it is the prerogative of deans to structure their respective school's review activities in ways that lead to meaningful analysis and actionable results. Where it is not practical or meaningful to review a credentialed program on its own, or where a credential is not the appropriate delimiter, consideration should be given to structures based on:

- Academic disciplines
- Departments
- Logical clusters of courses and/or programs

Considerations for logical groupings might include the following:

- Availability of adequate data
- Interrelationships between educational offerings
- Efficient use of resources and workload issues
- Ability to make inferences from related or aggregate data

III. Annual Program Reporting

On an annual cycle, schools, under the direction of the dean, will engage in preparing an annual report based on an environmental scan of credit offerings. The annual environmental scan is intended to provide a snapshot view of a program's effectiveness from learner, graduate, faculty, administrative, and community perspectives.

The quantitative data that forms the environmental scan is available primarily through Institutional Research and Planning (IRP). Quantitative data commonly contained within the environmental scan includes program enrolment and retention data, student experience survey data, provincial and institutional student outcome data, learner and graduate surveys, and industry or employment reports. Program areas may wish to identify and use additional data sources that are meaningful and significant to the particular area of study and the unique characteristics of the learners.

Institutional data and metrics are supplemented with qualitative or narrative data that reveal learner, graduate, faculty, administrative, and Program Advisory Council (PAC) perspectives. This data reflects the distinguishing or unique characteristics of the program area and its learners.

Information and results generated from the environmental scan are documented in the Annual Program Report that answers key questions which may include:

1. What is the purpose of the program and what are the program learning outcomes?
2. Who are the learners? What diverse strengths and abilities do they bring to the learning experience?
3. What does the student outcome data say about graduates?
4. What are the metrics and relevant benchmarks for student enrolment, retention, and graduation?
5. What external factors (accreditation processes, professional bodies, PACs, articulation, changes in the field/discipline) may affect the program in the next 3 to 5 years?
6. What do we know about the quality of the student learning experience from learners, graduates, faculty, PACs, and other stakeholders?
7. What, if any, program changes have occurred in the previous year, and what are the potential or known effects of these upon students or program effectiveness?

Roles and responsibilities:

1. *The VP, Education and deans review the data template for the environmental scan annually and communicate changes to the Director, Enrolment Systems and Continuous Improvement.*
2. *Institutional Research compiles a program data report and analysis from a range of available institutional and external sources and provides the data report to deans.*
3. *The dean reviews the program data reports.*
4. *The data report is provided to program chairs, who in collaboration with faculty, complete a report using the template provided.*
5. *Deans review and approve the Annual Program Report and determine if further analysis is needed, with the determination made in consultation with the program chair and Vice President Education as appropriate.*
6. *Schools file completed reports with the Vice-President, Education.*

IV. Ongoing and Responsive Curriculum Development and Program Renewal

Ongoing and responsive curriculum development and program renewal are part of the quality assurance cycle. Curriculum development and program renewal occur in response to indications that in-depth analysis and follow up would benefit learners and the program teaching and learning experience. Such indications are identified through a number of means, including the Annual Program Report; emergent opportunities for enhancement, development, and renewal; and specific or emergent program or stakeholder needs.

When the Annual Program Report signals opportunities for program renewal, or when performance measures do not adequately meet established institutional criteria or standards, deans (in consultation with program chairs and the VP, Education) refer programs for in-depth analysis. Led by program chairs, this analysis and renewal or development occurs in collaboration with faculty.

The Curriculum Development and Program Renewal (CDPR) team provides facilitated support and guidance for the renewal process. Professional resources from Learning Services, Eyē?Sqâ'lewen, IRP, and the Registrar's Office also support the analysis and subsequent actions required for renewal and development of existing programs.

Roles and responsibilities:

1. *Under the direction of the dean, the chair collaborates with faculty to create an action plan for further in-depth analysis in response to the Annual Program Report or other catalyst.*
2. *The dean and chair engage the CDPR team to facilitate and guide program enhancement, development, and renewal.*
3. *The chair ensures that professional resources related to learning are consulted throughout*

the process.

4. *The chair documents the outcomes of the action plan and renewal process.*
5. *The dean reviews the documented outcomes and determines next steps.*
6. *The dean informs the VP, Education of the outcomes of the in-depth analysis and subsequent curriculum development and program renewal processes.*

V. Internal and External Program Review

To meet the expectations and standards for quality assurance as determined by Camosun's Program Quality Assurance policy and guided by the Quality Assurance Process Audit, credentialed programs must address each component of the internal and external review process:

1. Self-study
2. Appropriate level of external peer and academic review
3. Action plan
4. Follow up and accountability processes

Program review aims to provide an evidence-informed evaluation of the effectiveness, structure, focus, and outcomes of a program. It includes both the internal and external assessment of program effectiveness and results in a plan of action for program enhancement and accountability.

Information gathered as part of the program review process helps identify the future direction, opportunities for enhancement, and needs and strengths of a program. It is a means of demonstrating accountability to the college community, stakeholders, the general public, and governing and funding bodies. The program review provides guidance for administrative decisions and considers whether the appropriate organizational, human, physical, and technological resources are accessible and available to support quality program offerings.

Program reviews of all Camosun credit offerings are undertaken every 5 to 7 years, based upon a pre-determined schedule published by the office of the Vice President, Education.

Self-studies and external reviews are in-depth, detailed and comprehensive, require adequate resources, and generally will take a full academic year to complete.

Deans, in collaboration with associate deans and chairs, establish the scope and priorities for program reviews to ensure that adequate resources, both financial and human, are identified and available. Planning at this stage establishes the foci of the review, and opportunities for sharing or pooling resources and information. For example, accredited programs may benefit from a program review schedule that leverages the information acquired through the accreditation process, avoiding unnecessary duplication.

Planning for the review takes into account the resources required for an effective and productive external review. Schools may choose to group similar discipline or program areas for the external review process.

The program review process includes the establishment of an internal review committee comprised of school leadership, chairs, program leaders, faculty, and other college personnel who can make meaningful contributions to the process. The CDPR team facilitates and guides reviews in collaboration with the internal review committee.

All members of the internal review committee are fully informed of the purpose, scope, and established standards for program review. Schools, with the support of the VP, Education, provide guidance related to standards and the systems necessary to maintain the required internal and external documentation and reporting mechanisms. Deans, in collaboration with associate deans and chairs, develop timelines for the review that reflect the availability and adequacy of school, department, and college resources.

Self-study

The self-study is primarily an internal process, undertaken by the internal review committee, with facilitation and guidance from the CDPR team. The internal review committee engages and collaborates with:

- Faculty discipline and subject matter experts
- Institutional Research and Planning
- Indigenous scholars
- Student Experience division
- Students and alumni
- Program Advisory Committees
- Community, industry and/or employers

Guided by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, Degree Quality Assessment Board, and expectations of the Quality Assurance Process Audit, a self-study examines the following:

1. Program structure, admission and completion requirements, method of delivery and curriculum.
2. Program strengths and opportunities, desired improvements, and future directions.
3. Student/graduate achievement of program learning outcomes and ways that achievement is measured.
4. Methods used for assessing student progress and achievement to ensure that the program's stated goals have been achieved.

5. Articulation guidelines or requirements and standards of any related accrediting or professional body.
6. Graduate satisfaction level, student satisfaction level, and graduation rate.
7. Graduate employment rates, employer satisfaction level, and Program Advisory Committee satisfaction level.
8. Faculty performance, including the quality of teaching and currency in the field of specialization.¹

Both qualitative and quantitative data inform the self-study. A review and analysis of the data and subsequent reflection inform recommendations for the future direction of the program. Recommendations are fulsome, goal based, and typically include the renewal of curriculum and of the teaching and learning experience.

The self-study process results in a comprehensive written report for submission to the external review panel. To ensure transparency, the self-study report is distributed to school committees and college leadership at the same time as it is submitted to the external review panel.

Roles and responsibilities:

1. *Deans and chairs identify the internal review committee*
2. *Chairs engage with the CDPR team for support in facilitating the review process.*
3. *The internal review committee:*
 - a. *Develops a timeframe for the completion of the self-study.*
 - b. *Coordinates with Institutional Research and Planning to identify additional data needed for review.*
 - c. *Determines what qualitative data is needed for the review and works with CDPR facilitators to launch focus groups, surveys etc.*
 - d. *Completes the self-study report.*
4. *Deans approve and publish the self-study report.*

The External Review

The purpose of the external review is to provide an objective, informed assessment of a program's effectiveness based upon the self-study report and relevant institutional policy and standards (Appendix A).

The Vice President, Education has established guidelines for the composition of external review panels; these guidelines meet institutional, academic and Ministry standards and expectations.

Depending on the nature of the review, the external review panel is typically composed of 2 to

¹ Evaluation of faculty performance is subject to the rights and obligation specified in the College's current agreements.

3 individuals who hold one or more of these attributes:

- An advanced academic credential related to the subject area under review;
- Relevant academic experience in areas such as quality assessment (e.g., as appraisers for accrediting bodies or as reviewers of programs), curriculum design, teaching and learning;
- Required or desired professional credentials;
- Experience in post-secondary and/or educational leadership.²

Consistent with Camosun College's commitments, consideration should also be given for the following attributes:

- Knowledge of diverse Indigenous cultures, traditions, histories, and aspirations;
- An understanding of and appreciation for the educational mission, mandate and context of a community college.

The inclusion of academic peers on an external review panel is a requirement for all credentialed programs undergoing review. External review panels established for degree program reviews must also meet DQAB Program Review Requirements (Appendix B).

Deans, in collaboration with the Vice President, Education, will seek recommendations from the program chair and faculty for suitable external review panel members. The characteristics of the program undergoing review are considered in the selection of the external review panel members, as are real or perceived conflicts of interest. Reviewers with a combination of academic, educational, and professional experiences and qualifications will provide the most valuable feedback on program reviews.

When possible, and to make the best use of allotted resources, both personnel and financial, the dean may consider clustering or grouping similar discipline or program areas for the purpose of an external review.

External panel members are provided with information and documentation in advance of the review including:

- Program Quality Assurance policy
- Self-study report
- Camosun College's Strategic Plan and other relevant plans
- The most recent accreditation documentation if appropriate
- Materials available publicly and to students that assist in describing course offerings, degree programs, etc.
- The summary results of student, graduate, and employer surveys

² Adapted from DQAB's [Degree Program Review: Criteria and Guidelines](#), (2017), p. 5.

- Data and analysis of student learning experience gathered by the program
- List of all program faculty and staff members (full time, part time and term), including qualifications
- BC Student Outcomes Reporting Survey data for the program
- A statement of goals for the review from the dean, developed in consultation with the program chair

The external review panel meets with students, education leaders, chairs, faculty and other college personnel to discuss and explore strengths, concerns, challenges, and opportunities arising from the self-study report and recommendations.

Roles and responsibilities:

1. *Director, Educational Policy and Planning provides administrative oversight to the external review process.*
2. *Deans establish and schedule external review panels.*
3. *The external review panel:*
 - a) *Reviews the self-study report and other relevant institutional or program materials.*
 - b) *Conducts a site visit that includes a review of facilities and interviews students, program and administrative faculty and staff.*
 - c) *Writes a report that addresses findings and recommendations for improvement.*
4. *Deans write the institutional response to the external review panel report with input from the associate dean and chairs.*

Action Plan and Reporting Out

An action plan is developed in response to the findings and recommendations of the internal review committee and the external review panels. The action plan identifies long and short-term goals, timelines, required resources, and accountabilities. Institutional processes and procedures (Education Approvals, reporting out standards) and the college's strategic priorities are considered in the development of the action plan. Written by the program chair and faculty on the internal review committee, and approved by the dean, this plan sets the future direction for the program.

A Program Review Report that summarizes the program review (self-study, external review panel findings and recommendations, and action plan) is completed by the chair in collaboration with the dean and the internal review committee. This report meets the requirement for public reporting of the program review for quality assurance.

Roles and responsibilities:

1. *The internal review committee develops an action plan, approved by the dean.*
2. *The chair, with support from the internal review committee, completes a Program Review Report that includes:*
 - a) *Internal review committee members*

- b) External review panel members*
- c) An overview of the program's description, learning outcomes, strengths, and areas for improvement from the self-study report*
- d) A summary of the external review panel's recommendations*
- 3. The dean submits the Program Review Report to the Director, Educational Planning and Policy for publication on the college's quality assurance website.*
- 4. The Office of Education Policy and Planning provides college senior leadership with an annual update on all reviews.*

Implementation Progress Reporting

For accountability and transparency, progress updates from the action plan are shared with the college community and external stakeholders.

The final step, occurring approximately one year following the self-study and external program review, provides faculty, chairs and educational leadership with an opportunity to mark the progress made toward accomplishing action plans, acknowledge successes, and celebrate the future directions of credentialed programs.

Roles and responsibilities:

- 1. Deans oversee and direct follow-up processes following a program review.*
- 2. Chairs provide regular and ongoing progress updates of the implementation to deans and associate deans.*
- 3. Deans provide reports on the progress of the implementation to the VP Education.*
- 4. Chairs, in consultation with the dean, provide a progress update to students, the college community, industry and PACs.*

VI. Appendix A: Related College Policies

Program Quality Assurance policy

[Policy E-1.12 Program Quality Assurance Policy E-1.12 Program Quality Assurance](#)

Education Approvals policy

[Policy E-1.6 Educational Approvals](#)

VII. Appendix B: Degree Quality Assessment Board Requirements

Source: [Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, Degree Quality Authorization Board
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/degree-authorization/qapa/2_qapa_handbook.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/degree-authorization/qapa/2_qapa_handbook.pdf)

Criteria that will be used in assessing program review and assessment:

Evidence of a formal, institutionally approved policy and procedure for the periodic review of programs (i.e. formative and ongoing reviews and a summative review normally every five years) against published standards that includes the following characteristics:

A self-study undertaken by faculty members and administrators of the program based on evidence relating to program performance, including strengths and weaknesses, desired improvements, and future directions.

For example, a self-study considers:

- *The continuing appropriateness of the program's structure, admissions requirements, method of delivery and curriculum for the program's educational goals and standards;*
- *The adequacy and effective use of resources (physical, technological, financial and human);*
- *faculty performance including the quality of teaching and supervision and demonstrable currency in the field of specialization.*
- *That the learning outcomes achieved by students/graduates meet the program's stated goals, the degree level standard, and where appropriate, the standards of any related regulatory, accrediting or professional association;*
- *The continuing adequacy of the methods used for evaluating student progress and achievement to ensure that the degree level standards have been achieved; and*
- *Where appropriate, the graduate employment rates, graduate satisfaction level, employer satisfaction level, advisory board satisfaction level, student satisfaction level, and graduate rate.*
- *An assessment conducted by a panel consisting of experts external to the institution that normally includes a site visit; a report of the expert panel assessing program quality and recommending any changes needed to strengthen that quality; and an institutional response to the recommendations in the report.*
- *A summary of the conclusions of the evaluation made publicly available.*