



MEMORANDUM

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TO: Stan Kazymierchuk, Chair, Senate Standing Committee on Program Review [SSCPR]

FROM: David P. Burns, Vice-Chair, University Senate

DATE: January 17, 2018

SUBJECT: The Regulatory Context of The Program Review Process

**NOTE: Endorsed By The Senate Standing Committee On Program Review on January 24, 2018**

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In response to your query regarding the links between program review and the Senate, *writ large*, I have prepared the following policy brief.

**Why does the Senate discuss program reviews through its Standing Committee on Program Review?**

KPU has two salient characteristics in this regard. First, it is a public institution. Second, it is an exempt educational institution.

As a public institution KPU must hold itself to the high standards of public accountability prescribed in documents such as the Auditor General's *Performance Reporting Principles for the British Columbia Public Sector* (2003). We must, in short, provide transparent accounting of the ways in which we use the public funding we receive to provide quality service to the citizens of our community. This obligation is deepened by our *exempt* status (which confers unto KPU a level of autonomy in our degree development and revision processes). Since the Senate's authority under the *University Act* is most explicit with respect to academic issues, one of the Senate's most important duties to our community is, therefore, academic quality assurance.

The Senate's program review duty is defined by a number of principles observable in provincial policy and cross-provincial agreements:

- 1) Program review is primarily the responsibility of KPU as an institution (and not government) and the Board of Governors is required by law to consult the Senate on educational policy in this area. **We are, in short, responsible as a university community through our Senate.**

*per* Degree Quality Assessment Board Secretariat (2017b)

*per* Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (2007)

*per* *University Act*, British Columbia, 25.2.6.f

## MEMORANDUM

- 2) Program review is the primary mechanism through which to ensure we are carrying out the **commitments we made**, through our full program proposals, to Government and the people of British Columbia.  
  
*per Bond, Gelin, van Brummelen, Waterhouse and Stubbs (2011), the “Stubbs Report”*  
  
*per Degree Quality Assessment Board Secretariat (2017b), 2.1*
- 3) Program review is meant to be **cyclical** and **ongoing**, and not a response to a particular change.  
  
*per Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (2007), 2.7.10*  
  
*per Shanahan (2015), p. 47*  
  
*per Degree Quality Assessment Board Secretariat (2017a), 2.3*  
  
*per Degree Quality Assessment Board Secretariat (2017b)*
- 4) Program review should be **timely**, so that policy makers (internal and external) may use the information produced to respond to labour market demand.  
  
*per Auditor General of British Columbia (2003), for timeliness of public reporting*  
  
*per Degree Quality Assessment Board Secretariat (2017b), appendix 1.1.a*
- 5) Program review is the **basis** for an institution’s ongoing use of the Education Quality Assurance standard, and its status as an **exempt institution**.  
  
*per Governance and Quality Assurance Branch (2016)*  
  
*per Degree Quality Assessment Board Secretariat (2017a), 2.3*

**As a result of the duties outlined above, the Senate of any university in British Columbia should consider program review findings in curricular development (as in 2 and 3), budget development (as in 4 and Performance Reporting Principles) and in its general approach to good governance (as in 1 and 5).**



## MEMORANDUM

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