



Program Review Guide #5: External Review

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List of Acronyms

ERT: External Review Team

KPU: Kwantlen Polytechnic University

OPA: Office of Planning & Accountability

PAC: Program Advisory Committee

SSCPR: Senate Standing Committee on Program Review

1. Introduction

The external review is an integral component of KPU's program review process and follows the completion of the Self Study Report. It is conducted by a team of three members, two of whom are external to KPU, and one, who is a faculty member from another faculty at KPU. The purpose of the External Review is to validate the Self-Study Report and provide additional information regarding program's strengths and areas needing improvement.

The external review provides an external perspective on program quality.

The external review phase involves a site visit, either on-campus, online, or hybrid, which allows the External Review Team (ERT) to meet with various stakeholders to ensure that the ERT has sufficient information upon which to base their assessment of the Self-Study Report.

2. External Review Team

The ERT assists the program under review in identifying specific program strengths upon which to build and areas needing improvement.

Composition of the External Review Team

The ERT is comprised of three members:

- Two external reviewers: one academic from a comparable program at another postsecondary institution and someone who works in the discipline/sector. In some cases, both of the external reviewers can be academics at other postsecondary institutions with comparable programs to the program under review, where there is no obvious sector outside of academia.
- A faculty member from a different program/faculty at KPU. KPU faculty membership of the ERT is determined by the Chair of the Senate Standing Committee on Program Review (SSCPR). The internal candidates should:
 - come from a program other than the program under review;
 - have an appropriate level of academic, experiential, and /or discipline/sector expertise for the program under review;
 - The internal candidates do not need to be familiar with the field under review; they are on the team to provide information about KPU and to contribute to the interviews by the external review team.

The ERT is chaired by one of the three members of the team. The Chair is selected during the orientation call.

Responsibilities of the External Review Team

The ERT will:

- Review the program's SSCPR-approved Self-Study Report prior to the site visit;
- Participate in a 30-minute orientation call prior to the site visit;
- Participate in the site visit to meet with students, faculty, administrators, alumni, and other relevant parties;
- The two external members are responsible for completing the External Review Report template, which will be provided.

In addition to the above, the Chair of the ERT will:

- Ensure consensus among the members of the ERT when writing the report;
- Coordinate the completion and sign-off of the External Review Report among team members;
- Send the completed report to the Manager, Quality Assurance within 4 weeks of the site visit.

External Review Report Template

The ERT will be provided with the External Review Report template prior to the site visit to record their assessment of the Self-Study Report.

The ERT will be asked to validate the Self-Study Report's findings and recommendations in reference to the following criteria:

- Do the data and the site visit support the Self-Study Report's findings?
- Do the data and the site visit support the Self-Study Report's recommendations?
- Does the ERT have any comments or additional recommendations?

Selection of the External Review Team

There are three steps involved in selecting the members of the ERT:

1. Faculty in the program under review determine a list of potential external reviewers (3 academics and 3 discipline/sector representatives), ensuring that the reviewers have no self-interest in the outcome of the review (See Appendix A: Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Guidelines). The program completes the External Review Team Candidate Form for each candidate (including name, contact information, credentials, rationale for the nomination, and any conflict of interest issues) and ranks the candidates in order of preference. The program sends the forms to the Manager, Quality Assurance at sscrp@kpu.ca (See Appendix B: External Review Team Candidate Form). Once the forms are received, the Manager, Quality Assurance gets in touch with the program to help with the planning of the site visit.
2. The Dean formally invites the top two external candidates for the site visit. If any of the two candidates fail to accept the invitation, others on the list are invited.

3. External Review Site Visit

The site visit is scheduled at a time suitable for the ERT and program parties. Remote site visits are scheduled over 2 days, 4 hours per day and conducted via Microsoft Teams. On-campus and hybrid site visits take place at the KPU campus where the majority of the program courses are offered and typically runs from 9 am to 5 pm.

Who will be Part of the Site Visit?

The following people should be invited to meet the External Review Team:

- Program Chair
- Current faculty
- Current students
- Alumni
- Dean and/or Associate Dean
- Liaison Librarian
- Central and/or Degree Advisor
- Career Services, if the program works with Career Services
- Program Advisory Committee (PAC) Members, if the program has a PAC

Planning a Remote Site Visit

The remote site visits are planned and hosted by the Quality Assurance Team from the Office of Planning and Accountability (OPA). Below is a breakdown of major tasks and responsibilities.

Timeline	Task	Responsibility	Notes
3 months before site visit	Nominate candidates	Program	Nominate at least 6 candidates (external to KPU) using the nomination forms provided in Appendix B.
	Determine dates	Program	Determine the dates of the site visit.
	Develop agenda	Program/OPA	Coordinate availability and develop the agenda. Please see Appendix C for a sample agenda.
2 months before site visit	Invite Candidates	Dean's Office	Invite top two candidates.
	Select KPU member of ERT	SSCPR Chair	Invite a KPU faculty member from a different faculty to join the ERT.
1 month before site visit	Provide ERT with necessary documents	OPA	Send the ERT the SSCPR-approved <i>Self-Study Report, External Review Template and Guide for External Review Teams</i> .
	Orientation meeting with ERT	OPA	Organize a call with the ERT to discuss their roles and responsibilities. Program Chair is invited to attend the orientation meeting.

Timeline	Task	Responsibility	Notes
	Invite participants	OPA	Invite students, faculty, alumni, liaison librarian, career services, if applicable, program advisor, Program Advisory Committee (PAC) members, if applicable, program chair, and Dean, track RSVPs.
Two days before site visit	Send reminders	OPA	Send a reminder email to individuals who accepted the meeting invite.
On the days of site visit	Host meetings	OPA	Quality Assurance Team hosts the ERT's meetings with various stakeholders.
3 weeks after site visit	Send a reminder to ERT	OPA	Remind ERT the submission deadline for the External Review Report.
End of semester	Send Thank You notes	SSCPR Chair	The Chair of SSCPR sends a short note of gratitude to the members of ERT for their participation in the external review process.

Planning an On-campus/Hybrid Site Visit¹

On-campus site visits are led by OPA and supported by an Dean's Assistant. Below is a breakdown of major tasks and responsibilities.

Timeline	Task	Responsibility	Notes
3 months before site visit	Nominate candidates	Program	Nominate at least 6 candidates (external to KPU) using the nomination forms provided in Appendix B.
	Determine Date	Program	Determine the date and campus location for the site visit.
	Develop agenda	Program/OPA	Coordinate availability and develop the agenda. Please see Appendix D for a sample agenda.
	Review Candidates	SSCPR	Approve and rank the nominated candidates.
2 months before site visit	Invite Candidates	Dean's Office	Invite top two candidates.
	Select KPU member of ERT	SSCPR Chair	Invite a KPU faculty member from a different faculty to join the ERT.
1 month before site visit	Provide ERT with necessary documents	OPA	Send the ERT the SSCPR-approved <i>Self-Study Report, External Review Template and Guidelines for External Review Teams</i> .
	Orientation meeting with ERT	OPA	Organize a call with the ERT to discuss their roles and responsibilities. Program Chair is invited to attend the orientation meeting.
	Invite participants	OPA	Invite students, faculty, alumni, liaison librarian, career services, if applicable, program advisor, Program Advisory Committee (PAC) members, if applicable, program chair, and Dean. Track RSVPs to confirm attendance.
	Site visit arrangements	Dean's Office/OPA	Arrange a meeting room for the site visit. Arrange travel and lodging for the ERT, if required. ² Arrange parking passes, if required. Arrange catering (coffee, snacks, and meals). Collect and submit expense claims.
Two days before site visit	Send reminders	OPA	Send a reminder email to individuals who accepted the meeting invite.
On the days of site visit	Host meetings	OPA	OPA hosts the ERT's meetings with various parties.
3 weeks after site visit	Send a reminder to ERT	OPA	Remind ERT the submission deadline for the External Review Report.
End of semester	Send Thank You notes	SSCPR Chair	The Chair of SSCPR sends a short note of gratitude to the members of ERT for their participation in the external review process.

¹ While the external review team attends in-person, other participants are given the option to participate in-person or remotely.

² The ERT will be reimbursed by OPA for reasonable expenses for travel, lodging, meals, and local transportation incurred while fulfilling their duties.

Logistics of On-campus/Hybrid Site Visits

Food

The ERT should be provided food (breakfast, lunch and non-alcoholic refreshments) during their visit. OPA will contribute up to \$200 (pending available budget) for refreshments served on the day and will transfer those funds to the appropriate account (the Dean's Assistant will have this information) after the site visit. Once the visit is over, please provide sscpr@kpu.ca with the following:

- Codes for where the funds should go:
 - ORG code and name associated with ORG code
 - Account code and name associated with Account code
- Electronic copy of the actual invoice

If the program needs additional funds for food, please consult the Dean/Associate Dean. OPA's budget is limited and must accommodate other programs across the institution.

Parking

If the ERT members who are external to KPU are driving to campus, electronic parking passes will need to be arranged. The Dean's Assistant can set these up.

Room and Technology

As soon as the date is known, book a meeting room or classroom where the ERT can work and meet alumni, faculty, and other parties. The room should have appropriate technology for guests who will be participating remotely. IT Service Desk can provide assistance with technology, if required.

Tips for a Successful On-campus/Hybrid Site Visit

- Make sure to book a room with the necessary technology for those who will be attending the meetings remotely.
- Provide invitees with ample time to confirm their availability.
- Provide ERT with links to KPU's latest VISION and the Academic Plan, and additional information about the program, etc.
- Make sure to end each meeting on time so that the attendees for the next meeting do not wait outside the meeting room any longer than necessary.
- Ask representatives from the Library, Advising, and Career Services to share relevant documentation (e.g., brochures).
- Provide ERT with the names of those who will be joining them throughout the day (e.g. students, alumni, advisory board members, etc.)
- Encourage open discussion of the program's strengths and weaknesses.
- When ERT is talking to students and alumni, program faculty should not be present.

Appendix A: Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Guidelines for External Reviewers Participating in Program Reviews at Kwantlen Polytechnic University

These guidelines are to assist programs in their nomination of external review team candidates as well as the external reviewers themselves and reflect the requirements as outlined by the Degree Quality Assessment Board (see [Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy](#)).

External reviewers must avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest including that which might impair or impugn the independence, integrity or impartiality of the review. There must be no appearance of bias, based on what a reasonable person might perceive.

When identifying candidates to serve on the external review team, select those experts who are recognized by their peers for having a broad outlook, open mind and sound judgment. Candidates should possess the qualifications to engender the confidence of all those involved in the development, results, and actions resulting from the program review.

Definition of a Conflict³

An actual or potential conflict of interest arises when an expert is placed in a situation in which a) his or her personal interests, financial or otherwise, or b) the interests of an immediate family member or of a person with whom there exists, or has recently existed, an intimate relationship, conflict or appear to conflict with the expert's responsibilities to the program under review, Kwantlen's Senate Standing Committee on Program Review, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, and/or the public interest. External experts appointed by the program / SSCPR should not have any connection to the program under review within the previous two years, or for a period of up to three months following the completion of their duties in connection with the program's review. Some examples of such connections include:

- preparing an application or providing expert advice used in developing the program
- making public comment for or against a program or institution that might result in the apprehension of bias
- working for or previously employed in the program
- being a student or a recent graduate of the program
- working as a consultant for the program
- serving in an advisory capacity or on a board for the program
- having financial or other business interests with the program
- supervising students or employees of the program
- collaborating regularly with anyone in or associated with the program

Some experts are invited as representatives of private sector organizations that broadly represent private sector interests. In such instances, there would not normally be a conflict of interest unless the member has been actively involved in developing, promoting, or publicly commenting on a program.

³ Adapted from [DQAB Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy](#)

Disclosure of Conflict

It is unlikely that an external reviewer with a conflict of interest will be nominated, let alone selected, for the external review team. However, should it occur, the following procedure will be used. Where there is an actual or potential conflict of interest, the expert must disclose his/her circumstances and consult with the chair of the SSCPR. If unsure if a conflict exists, the expert should seek advice from the chair. It is then the responsibility of the SSCPR chair to determine whether a conflict of interest exists and to inform the program's self-study committee and the SSCPR of his/her decision. Similarly, if a program learns of a conflict of interest regarding an individual appointed by the SSCPR, then the program shall make full written disclosure to the chair of the SSCPR.

Action Required When a Conflict Exists

The Chair of the SSCPR will exercise his/her discretion in determining if an actual or potential conflict of interest exists and notify the parties accordingly. Should the chair determine that an actual or potential conflict exists, the external expert must decline to serve as a reviewer. In this event, an alternate will be selected from the list of candidates provided by the program.

Appendix B: External Review Team Candidate Form

Kwantlen Polytechnic University Program Review External Review Team Candidate Form

The three-person External Review Team (ERT) is made up of two experts from outside KPU and one internal to KPU (but external to the Program under review).

The External Review Team:

- assesses the extent to which the program's Self-Study report reflects the reality of the program;
- strengthens the program's assertions of quality and statement of resource needs;
- identifies additional information to assist the program with its quality improvement process;
- gives KPU's administration and Board of Governors confidence in the completeness and accuracy of program review reports.

The external review process must be a genuine appraisal carried out by qualified individuals who have no self-interest in the outcome. Thus, the thoughtful selection of the ERT is crucial to the success of a program review.

With this in mind, please nominate at least three academics and three discipline/sector representatives **external** to KPU and rank them in order of preference. The Dean will formally invite the top-ranked candidates.

The external candidates should:

- be either educators or experts in the discipline/sector under review; normally nominate both academic and discipline/sector experts;
- have recognized competence in the field of study of the program;
- not be, or appear to be, in a conflict of interest: please refer to the [DQAB Conflict of Interest Policy](#) for additional information.

Complete a nomination form for each of the six nominees.

Submit all nominations and/or questions to the Manager, Quality Assurance, Office of Planning & Accountability at sscpr@kpu.ca.

Please nominate at least three academic and three discipline/sector candidates and list your nominations for External Reviewers in descending order of preference.

Academic Candidates:

Name	
Title	
Institution	
Credentials	
Contact information	
Experience	
Prior contact with KPU, if known	
Rationale for Nomination	

Name	
Title	
Institution	
Credentials	
Contact information	
Experience	
Prior contact with KPU, if known	
Rationale for Nomination	

Name	
Title	
Institution	
Credentials	

Contact information	
Experience	
Prior contact with KPU, if known	
Rationale for Nomination	

Name	
Title	
Institution	
Credentials	
Contact information	
Experience	
Prior contact with KPU, if known	
Rationale for Nomination	

Discipline/Sector Candidates:

Name	
Title	
Organization	
Credentials	
Contact information	
Experience	
Prior contact with KPU, if known	
Rationale for Nomination	

Name	
------	--

Title	
Organization	
Credentials	
Contact information	
Experience	
Prior contact with KPU, if known	
Rationale for Nomination	

Name	
Title	
Organization	
Credentials	
Contact information	
Experience	
Prior contact with KPU, if known	
Rationale for Nomination	

Name	
Title	
Organization	
Credentials	
Contact information	
Experience	
Prior contact with KPU, if known	
Rationale for Nomination	

Appendix C: Sample Remote Site Visit Agenda

Kwantlen Polytechnic University

[Program Name]

External Review Site Visit Agenda

[Month Day & Day, Year]

Via Microsoft Teams

Thanks to External Reviewers:

NAME

NAME

NAME

Day 1: DATE

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 9:00 - 9:50: | Introductions and Interview with Program Chair |
| 9:50 - 10:00: | Break |
| 10:00 - 11:00: | Meet with Program Faculty |
| 11:00 - 11:10: | Break |
| 11:10 - 12:00: | Meet with University Services Panel [Library Services/ Advising/Career Services (if applicable)] |
| 12:00 - 12:10: | Break |
| 12:10 - 12:50: | Meet with Dean/Associate Dean |

Day 2: DATE

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 9:00 – 10:00: | Meet with Program Advisory Board (if any) / Alumni |
| 10:00 - 10:10: | Break |
| 10:10 - 11:10: | Meet with Students |
| 11:10 - 11:20: | Break |
| 11:20 - 12:00: | Final Meeting with Program Chair |
| 12:10 - 12:20: | Break |
| 12:20-12:50: | External Review Team meets to discuss findings and coordinate report writing. |

Appendix D: Sample On-campus Site Visit Agenda

Kwantlen Polytechnic University

[Program Name]

External Review Site Visit Agenda

[Month Day, Year]

[Location]

Thanks to External Reviewers:

NAME

NAME

NAME

9:00– 9:30:	Breakfast and Introductions
9:30 – 10:10:	Interview with Program Chair
10:10 – 10:20:	Break
10:20 – 10:50:	Tour of Program Facilities
10:50 - 11:30:	Meet with University Services Panel [Library Services/Advising/Career Services (if applicable)]
11:30 – 12:30:	Meet with Students
12:30 – 1:30:	Working lunch with Faculty
1:30 – 2:10:	Meet with Dean/Associate Dean
2:10 – 2:20:	Break
2:20 – 3:20:	Meet with Advisory Board (if any) / Alumni
3:20 – 4:00:	Final Meeting with Program Chair
4:00 – 4:30:	External Review Team meets to discuss findings and coordinate report writing

Appendix E: Sample External Review Invite

Dear [name],

As part of KPU's mission to provide students with a high quality and highly relevant education, we are in the process of reviewing the [name of program] program. During the first phase of the review process, feedback has been collected from students, alumni, faculty, and discipline/sector representatives using surveys.

The next phase is a site visit on [Month Day, Year] when a panel of three experts will meet to talk to people with an interest in the program. The external review panel would like to meet with the [group name]. Your participation is important and will help to inform the program's plans going forward.

Kindly note that you can join the meeting either face-to-face on campus or remotely using either the link or the phone number provided below.

DATE:

Time

Location and Teams Meeting Link

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards,