



KWANTLEN
POLYTECHNIC
UNIVERSITY

Program Review Guide #6: Quality Assurance Plan Development

1. Introduction

The Quality Assurance Plan is a multi-year strategic plan for how the program will address the recommendations emerging from the self-study and external review of the program, as well as selected United Nations (UN) sustainable development goals (SDG) in alignment with KPU's Strategic Plan, Climate Strategy and Academic Plan. Like other aspects of program review, it is faculty driven and provides an opportunity to identify priorities and resources required to improve the program going forward.

*The **Quality Assurance Plan** provides a framework for making evidence-based decisions to move the program forward while staying aligned with KPU's Strategic Plan and Academic Plan.*

The Quality Assurance Plan provides a strategic framework for improving the program by:

- Acting on recommendations from the Self-Study Report and External Review Report.
- Identifying how the program will address selected UN SDGs in alignment with KPU's Strategic Plan, Climate Strategy and Academic Plan.
- Setting viable goals on what the program intends to accomplish for improving program quality within the next five years.
- Identifying how the recommendation(s) drawn from the Self-Study Report and External Review Report relate to each goal.
- Developing actions the program must achieve to attain its goals over the next five years.
- Establishing a timeline for each action.
- Determining the individuals/groups responsible for carrying out each action.
- Determining the resources required, if any, for each action.

Timing

The work on developing the Quality Assurance Plan should start immediately after the Senate Standing Committee on Program Review's (SSCPR) approval of the External Review Report of the program, although programs may wish to begin planning before this. The Quality Assurance Plan should be submitted to the SSCPR within four months of the approval of the External Review Report.

Institutional Support

Programs are strongly encouraged to consult their Deans and/or Associate Deans very early in the process to establish consensus on program direction and available resources. The program should also carefully consider how best to justify its goals and actions required to achieve the goals to ensure the Plan receives the support of the Dean, the Provost and the SSCPR.

Once the QAP has been drafted, programs can consider presenting it to the program advisory committee (PAC) to solicit its perspectives and suggestions, and to facilitate alignment of recommendations and action items with industry and community expectations.

Once a draft Plan is ready for review, the Dean and/or Associate Dean and a program representative (typically the Chair or Coordinator) should meet with the Provost to discuss the Quality Assurance Plan.

The Quality Assurance Plan must be signed off by the Dean and Provost before being submitted to the SSCPR for review and approval.

The sign-off by the Dean and Provost is to indicate that they are in support of the program's quality assurance plan but it doesn't replace the normal governance and approval processes. The plan needs to be approved by the SSCPR, which will consider whether it is adequately addressing all the recommendations, with clear and realistic timelines.

The Plan, once approved, may include activities that will require other governance approvals. For instance, if one item in the plan is to revise course curriculum, those revisions would need to be approved by the Senate Standing Committee on Curriculum and the Senate. Similarly, if the plan includes a request for additional FTEs, the Dean may need to request additional budget to cover the request; budgets have their own approval processes. Being in support of the request doesn't mean the Dean has the necessary funds to make it happen.

2. Completing the Quality Assurance Plan

Summary

This section provides a brief overview of the key findings of the program review about program quality, such as its strengths, challenges, opportunities for improvement, potential threats, etc.

List of Recommendation from Self-Study Report and External Review Report

The recommendations from the Self-Study Report and the External Review Report are incorporated into the Quality Assurance Plan template by OPA.

Recommendations the Quality Assurance Plan does not address

This section lists the recommendations from the Self-Study and External Review reports that the program is unable to address and explains the rationale for not addressing them. The Quality Assurance Plan is expected to address all recommendations, unless there is a compelling reason for not doing so. Sometimes changes happen since the recommendation was made that nullifies it. Sometimes the External Review Report includes a recommendation that is out of scope for program review and so shouldn't be addressed. Sometimes there are other factors, such as resource requirements, or changes in the institution that make it impossible to address a recommendation. A clear, but concise, reason for not addressing the recommendation is required.

Add or delete rows in the table as required. If all of the recommendations are being addressed, leave the table blank.

Quality Assurance Five-Year Action Plan

To facilitate developing a plan, related recommendations are grouped under one goal. There is no limit to the number of goals in the plan, but the plan should be realistic and achievable within a maximum of five years.

Self-Study- and External Review-Related Goals

Goals are broad statements about what the program intends to accomplish to ensure program quality (e.g. update program to maintain relevance, promote the program more effectively within KPU and across the communities we serve in order to grow enrolments, update and align course outcomes and expectations, and program requirements to ensure successful student progression through the degree, expand and further integrate decolonization and Indigenization into the program).

Enter the date the plan will begin. This should be the month following the month when the Quality Assurance Plan is approved by the SSCPR.

Start by listing the goals the plan addresses. The template is set up for seven goals. Delete tables if there are fewer goals. If there are more than seven goals, copy and paste additional tables.

For each goal provide the following information:

- **Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses**

This section lists the recommendations from the Self-Study and External Review reports that relate to this Goal.

- **Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal**

The specific, demonstrable and realistic actions the program intends to take to address the Goal. Each action should include the following:

1. A brief description of the action within the program's scope (e.g. revamping program curriculum or consulting with other departments as part of information-gathering initiatives). Keep in mind the Quality Assurance Plan describes the actions of the program, not the rest of the institution. If action is required from outside the program, such as the Library, the action should be worded from the perspective of the action the program would take, not the library. For instance, consult with the library to expand the collection to address x need.
2. The person(s) responsible for leading the action.
3. A realistic timeframe. Proposed start and completion dates for each step must be included. The timeframe should take into account time required to obtain budget, where necessary, and the budget cycle. Do not use TBD or Ongoing. Many actions have an ongoing aspect to them so in these cases give the date the first cycle will be completed. Completion dates are important milestones to demonstrate what the program has accomplished in its annual follow-up reports.¹

- **Resource Requirements**

If a Goal requires resources outside of the program's scope of operations (e.g. funds to hire a new instructor, new space, etc.), the following should be considered:

1. What are the resources required to achieve the Goal?
2. When are these resources required?
3. What type of Faculty and/or Institutional support is required? This could include support for a budget request (either one-time or ongoing).

Clearly describe the nature of the resources required.

UN SDG-Related Goals

To ensure that progress is made on KPU's Strategic Plan, Academic Plan and Climate Strategy, when programs are being revised following the Program Review, they are required to incorporate some of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Quality Assurance Plan. The UN SDGs provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity, recognizing that "ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests."² KPU is one

¹ An annual follow-up report, demonstrating progress on completing the actions, is required until the QAP has been implemented.

² [THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development](#)

of 470 institutions that have signed the SDG Accord, agreeing that we will align all major efforts with the SDGs, including through our education, research, leadership, operational and engagement activities.

Given the great deal of overlap between the SDGs, the Academic Plan, the Strategic Plan, KPU's Climate Strategy, xé?el? Pathways Framework, KPU's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan, KPU's Accessibility Plan, and KPU's Task Force on Anti-Racism's Final Report and Recommendations, the SDGs are being used as a framework for making progress in aligning programs with these plans.

Each program must select at least one SDG in each of the following two categories (Environmental Sustainability and Social Justice, Economic Sustainability, and Health and Wellbeing) to address in the Quality Assurance Plan *that they are not already addressing, or not fully addressing*, in addition to addressing the recommendations emerging from the Self-Study and the External Review:

1. Environmental Sustainability

SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities: make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

SDG 13: Climate action: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

SDG 14: Life below water: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

SDG 15: Life on land: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

2. Social Justice, Economic Sustainability, and Health and Wellbeing

SDG 5: Gender equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

SDG 10: Reduced inequalities: Reduce inequality within and among countries

SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong education: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

SDG 1: No poverty: end poverty in all its forms everywhere

SDG 2: Zero hunger: end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

SDG 3: Good health and well-being: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

SDG 9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

The following two SDGs are excluded from this framework:

- UN SDG 4 (Quality education) - this aligns with the purpose of KPU and does not need specific focus through the SDGs.
- UN SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals) - this aligns with UN SDG 9.

Note that programs experiencing difficulties identifying relevant UN SDG-related goals are encouraged to contact OPA's Quality Assurance team to be connected with resources and discuss alternate strategies, which may include developing two goals from one of the above-noted categories instead of one goal from each.

Examples of UN SDG-related goals that programs could pursue include, but are certainly not limited to, the following:

- Implement strategies to improve the retention of female faculty (relates to UN SDG 5: Gender equality).
- Incorporate into the program Indigenous perspectives on water as a living entity, traditional governance systems, and community-led stewardship practices (relates to UN SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation).
- Improve the curriculum to maintain relevance with industry changes and increase the development of applied skills for the students (relates to UN SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all).

Numerous resources are available at KPU to support the implementation of action items that address a range of UN SDG-related goals. Examples include the following:

- [KPU's Anti-Racism Pedagogy Tool Kit](#) is a comprehensive resource designed to support educators in creating more inclusive and equitable learning environments.
- The [Wild Spaces Blog](#) offers Indigenous teachings on ecosystems;
- KPU's [Decolonizing Educational Practices site](#) provides inspiration and resources for decolonizing educational practices;

- KPU's Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities (OEIC) regularly offers a Relearning Gender workshop which explores gender identity, gender expression, sexuality, and the importance of pronouns. OEIC can be contacted at oeic@kpu.ca for scheduled offerings;
- The Teaching & Learning Commons' [Educational Consultant, UN SDG](#) supports faculty and program teams in designing purpose-driven learning experiences that focus on integrating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) into curriculum and teaching practices;

UN SDG-related goals are required to include the same information as self-study- and external review-related goals, as noted above; that is, they must identify the UN SDG the goal addresses, actions required to achieve the goal, and resource requirements. Tables 8 and 9 in the QAP template have been added to facilitate the inclusion of SDG-related goals.

Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System

KPU measures its institutional contributions to sustainability using the Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS), which is operated by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. In 2024, KPU achieved a Silver Rating within this system. The KPU Climate Strategy articulates a goal of achieving Gold, and then Platinum under this system. There are eight academic categories that are measured under STARS. In general, addressing UN SDGs within a program will also align that program with STARS criteria for sustainability. Programs interested in learning how they can help KPU achieve Gold and Platinum ratings are invited to check out the Supplementary Information on Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating Systems. Full descriptions of all academic criteria that will be reported in KPU's submission to STARS can be found within the STARS 3.0.1 technical manual:

<https://stars.aashe.org/resources-support/technical-manual/>

Plan Supported By

Before the plan can be submitted to the SSCPR, it must be reviewed and signed by the Dean and the Provost, indicating their support for the plan. Normally, the Dean/Associate Dean will review the plan with the program. Once the Dean is in support of the plan, the Dean/Associate Dean and a program representative will review it with the Provost, ensuring there is institutional support for it.