



Program Review: Guide for External Review Teams

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1. Overview

Program Review is one of KPU's quality assurance functions and is required by the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills' Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB). Program Review at KPU is a faculty-led, collaborative, systematic and evidence-based examination of a program's quality. It allows for a detailed analysis of a program's strengths and areas for improvement that result in enhancements to the program. During the Program Review process, students, faculty, alumni and other key parties with involvement in the program are all given an opportunity to provide their perspectives. KPU's Senate Standing Committee on Program Review (SSCPR) oversees the process.

There are four components to KPU's Program Review process: Self-Study, External Review, Quality Assurance Plan development and Annual Follow-up reporting on progress on implementing the Quality Assurance Plan.

The External Review, a key step in KPU's quality assurance process, follows the submission of a Self-Study report written by faculty representing the program under review. The Self-Study report defines the scope of the review, determines the focus of the External Review and informs subsequent Quality Assurance Plan development. The External Review seeks to validate the Self-Study report and provide an external perspective on program quality.

2. External Review Site Visit

The site visit, either held on-campus or online (or a blend of the two, i.e., hybrid), allows the External Review Team to meet with various parties with involvement in the program, and is organized to ensure that the team has sufficient information upon which to base their assessment of the Self-Study report. Remote site visits are scheduled over two days (four hours per day) and conducted via Microsoft Teams. On-campus/hybrid site visits take place at the KPU campus where the majority of the program courses are offered and typically run from 9 am to 5 pm on one day.

During the site visit, the External Review Team meets with students, faculty, alumni, administrators and other key parties to seek their input.

3. Role of the External Review Team

The External Review Team consists of three people:

- Two discipline/sector representatives, at least one of whom is an educator from a similar academic program at a different institution; and
- One KPU faculty member from a different program/Faculty (internal member).

All three members of the External Review Team are responsible for the following:

- Reviewing the program's completed Self-Study Report prior to the external review site visit;
- Prior to the site visit, participating in a 30-minute-long orientation call to (a) learn about the external review process, (b) review the agenda for the site visit), and (c) discuss other relevant logistics;

- Attend meetings (in-person or online) with students, faculty, alumni, administrators and other key parties.

The two discipline representatives are responsible for completing the External Review Report template, based on consensus. The template will be provided.

The internal member provides context about the KPU environment, shares their insights with the discipline representatives, and may provide input or feedback to the report template.

4. Self-Study Report

The Self-Study report, which will be provided to the External Review Team at least two weeks prior to the site visit, includes an overview of the program, the scope of the review, and a robust and data-supported analysis of program quality. The Self-Study report draws upon information collected from the surveys and internal data and proposes recommendations based upon an evidence-based assessment of the following areas:

- Curriculum Review (Chapter 2);
- Program Relevance and Demand (Chapter 3);
- Effectiveness of Instructional Delivery (Chapter 4);
- Resources, Services, and Facilities (Chapter 5).

5. The External Review Template

Following a review of the Self-Study Report and the site visit, the external members of External Review Team are expected to produce an independent, arms-length assessment which answers the following questions:

- Are the strengths and weaknesses of the program identified in the Self-Study report supported by data and External Review Team's findings?
- Are recommendations presented in the Self-Study Report supported by data, a clear rationale, and External Review Team's findings?
- Does the External Review Team have further recommendations for program improvements?

5.1 Validation of the Self-Study Report Findings and Recommendations

As part of the external review, reviewers are asked to assess the extent to which the findings, conclusions, and recommendations presented in the program's self-study report are supported by the evidence provided and by information gathered during the external review process.

Validation does not require reviewers to agree with every finding or recommendation. Rather, reviewers are asked to:

- Determine whether the self-study report accurately reflects the program's strengths, challenges, opportunities, and areas for improvement.
- Assess whether the findings are supported by the evidence presented in the self-study report and appendices.

- Consider whether information obtained through meetings with faculty, students, alumni, administrators, and other key parties aligns with the self-study's conclusions.
- Identify any significant findings, strengths, concerns, or opportunities that may have been overlooked or require further consideration.
- Comment on whether the program's proposed recommendations are appropriate and likely to address the identified issues.

Reviewers are encouraged to indicate where they agree with the program's findings and recommendations, where they differ, and to provide additional recommendations based on their professional judgment and disciplinary expertise.

The External Review Template provided by OPA will be used to complete this assessment and answer the questions above.

- When completing the Template, the External Review Team must not name or identify any individuals; all comments should speak to the program, not individuals.
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University can be referred to as “KPU” or in full. Please do not refer to the institution simply as “Kwantlen,” as that is the name of the Kwantlen First Nation.
- The External Review Team’s recommendations should be clearly presented in the recommendations section in Chapter 2, 3, 4, and 5. ***External reviewers are asked to keep their recommendations within the program’s scope of responsibility and authority.*** Feedback should emphasize practical, actionable improvements that the program can realistically implement, rather than broader institutional or system-level changes beyond its control. This focus helps ensure that recommendations are relevant, feasible, and directly support the program’s efforts to strengthen its quality and outcomes.
- The completed External Review Report will be a public document. Therefore, the External Review Team should review the document carefully to ensure that it is free from spelling, syntax and grammatical errors.

The External Review Team should submit the completed report template to the Manager of Quality Assurance within four weeks after the Site Visit. The Manager will forward the document to the Senate Standing Committee on Program Review for review.

Please direct any questions you may have to the Manager of Quality Assurance at sscpr@kpu.ca.