



Guidelines for Developing a Program Review Quality Assurance Plan

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JULY 2019*

Overview

The Program Review Quality Assurance Plan is a five-year strategy for how the program will ensure continued quality. Written by the Program Review Team, the Plan is the third phase of the Program Review cycle and follows the Self-Study and External Reviewers' Reports. It includes the program's planned goals, strategies and steps for the next five years to address recommendations from the Self-Study and External Reviewers' Reports.

The Program Review Quality Assurance Plan must be endorsed by the Dean and Provost before being submitted to and vetted by the Senate Standing Committee on Program Review (SSCPR).

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, strategies and steps to ensure the Plan receives the support of the Dean, the Provost and the SSCPR. Once a draft Plan is ready for review, a program representative (typically the Chair or Coordinator) and Dean and/or Associate Dean should schedule a meeting with the Provost.

Purpose

The Program Review Quality Assurance Plan provides a strategic framework to guide programs as they:

1. Act upon recommendations from the Self-Study Report and External Reviewers' Report.
2. Set viable goals and strategies for maintaining or improving program quality.
3. Provide a sound rationale for these goals and strategies.
4. Plan realistic (rather than aspirational) strategies to be carried over the next five years.
5. Determine the individuals/groups responsible for carrying out these strategies.
6. Determine the steps and resources required.
7. Establish a time-line for carrying out the plan.

Required Components of the Quality Assurance Plan

SUMMARY:

A brief overview of the key findings of the program review about program quality (e.g. strengths, challenges, opportunities for improvement, potential threats).

QUALITY ASSURANCE GOALS:

Goal

Broad statements about what the program intends to accomplish to ensure program quality (e.g. "Increase Student Enrollment by 50 %").

Rationale for this Goal

A justification that explains how the Goal addresses the following:

1. How achievement of the Goal will result in a resolution of specific issues identified through Program Review?
2. How does the Goal assure program quality?

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses

List the Recommendations from the Self-Study and External Review addressed in the Goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS THE QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN DOES NOT ADDRESS

If a Recommendation cannot be addressed, the program should explain why (e.g. the Recommendation may require actions or resources that fall beyond the program's scope of operation, or there has been a change since the Recommendation was made that nullifies it).

QUALITY ASSURANCE FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

Strategy

The specific plan of action the program must take to fulfill the associated Goal. There can be more than one strategy associated with a specific goal.

Example:

GOAL: Increase student enrollment by 50%

STRATEGY: Replace cohort model with open enrollment model.

Rationale for this Strategy

A justification that explains how the Strategy answers the following questions:

1. How does the Strategy support the Goal?
2. How can the Strategy be successfully carried out given the program's scope, internal environment and available resources?

Steps Required to Achieve this Strategy

The specific, demonstrable and realistic steps the program intends to take to address each Strategy.

Steps should acknowledge the following:

1. Responsibilities and tasks that fall within the program's scope (e.g. revamping program curriculum or consulting with other departments as part of information-gathering initiatives).

A realistic time frame. This should take into account any budget request and the budget cycle.

The person(s) responsible for leading the step.

Resource Implications

If the Plan 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 each Strategy?
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).