UTQAP Template

Cyclical Review: Terms of Reference

**Framework for UTQAP reviews:**

UTQAP processes support a structured approach for creating, reflecting on, assessing and developing plans to change and improve academic programs and units in the context of institutional and divisional commitments and priorities.

The University of Toronto (U of T), in its [*Statement of Institutional Purpose*](https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/institutional-purpose-statement-october-15-1992)*(1992)*, articulates its mission as a commitment "to being an internationally significant research university, with undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs of excellent quality." Thus “quality assurance through assessment of new program proposals and review of academic programs and units in which they reside is a priority for the University…:

The quality of the scholarship of the faculty, and the degree to which that scholarship is brought to bear in teaching are the foundations of academic excellence. More generally, all of the factors that contribute to collegial and scholarly life — academic and administrative complement, research and scholarly activity, infrastructure, governance, etc. — bear on the quality of academic programs and the broad educational experience of students. ([Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units](https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/academic-programs-and-units-policy-approval-and-review-june-24-2010) (2010))

The University’s approach to quality assurance is built on two primary indicators of academic excellence: the quality of the scholarship and research of faculty; and the success with which that scholarship and research is brought to bear on the achievement of Degree Level Expectations. These indicators are assessed by determining how our scholarship, research and programs compare to those of our international peer institutions and how well our programs meet their Degree Level Expectations.

Reviews provide the opportunity to celebrate successes, identify areas where we can do better and vigorously pursue improvements.

**Terms of Reference:**

The Terms of Reference are intended to establish the parameters of the cyclical review process and provide the framework of the review report.

|  |
| --- |
| Issues that are addressed through existing, specific University procedures are considered **out of scope** for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns). **Any such issues raised at any point during a review process** (self-study, site visit, review report) **must immediately be brought to the attention of the commissioning officer and routed through appropriate University channels for resolution**. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Program(s) under review: | Commissioning officer to insert as they appear on the schedule of reviews |
| Division/unit under review OR division/unit in which program(s) is housed:  Please select one of the above options and delete the other; i.e., if only the program is being reviewed and not the division/unit, then use the “division/unit in which program(s) is housed” | Commissioning officer to insert as they appear on the schedule of reviews |
| Commissioning officer: |  |
| Date of scheduled review: |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Template Instructions:**  These terms of reference have been designed to be customized to accommodate Provostial reviews of divisions (and the programs they offer) as well as Decanal Reviews of units and their programs. Commissioning officers may enlarge or enhance the criteria to meet the needs of the disciplines. |

Reviewers are asked to comment explicitly upon the following:

# Program(s)

|  |
| --- |
| The quality of each academic program and the learning environment of the students in each program must be addressed explicitly in the self-study and the external reviewers’ report. |

For **each** discrete program that is part of the review as defined in the Terms of Reference, please consider and comment on the following:

## Program objectives and key features

Consistency of the program’s objectives with the institution’s [mission](https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/institutional-purpose-statement-october-15-1992) and U of T’s/the division’s/unit’s [academic plans](https://www.vpacademic.utoronto.ca/reviews-academic-plans/academic-planning/current-divisional-plans/), [priorities](https://www.president.utoronto.ca/priorities-and-commitments/) and commitments, including consistency with any implementation plans developed following a previous review

Evidence that the following have been substantially considered in the context of the program and its associated resources:

* [Universal design principles](https://teaching.utoronto.ca/resources/universal-design-for-learning/) and/or the potential need to provide mental or physical disability-related accommodations, reflecting the University’s [Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities](https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/statement-commitment-regarding-persons-disabilities-february-25-2021)
* Support for student well-being and sense of community in the learning and teaching environment, reflecting the work of the [Expert Panel on Undergraduate Student Educational Experience](https://www.provost.utoronto.ca/committees/expert-panel-on-undergraduate-student-educational-experience-usee/) and the commitment to establishing a Culture of Caring and Excellence as recommended by the [Presidential and Provostial Task Force on Student Mental Health](https://www.provost.utoronto.ca/planning-policy/student-mental-health/)
* Opportunities for removing barriers to access and increasing retention rates for Indigenous students; for integrating Indigenous content into the curriculum in consultation with Indigenous curriculum developers; and for addressing any discipline-specific calls to action, reflecting the commitments made in [Answering the Call: Wecheehetowin: Final Report of the Steering Committee for the University of Toronto Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](https://www.provost.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/155/2018/05/Final-Report-TRC.pdf)
* Opportunities for removing barriers to access and increasing retention rates for Black students; for promoting intersectional Black flourishing, fostering inclusive excellence and enabling mutuality in teaching and learning, reflecting the commitments made in the [Scarborough Charter](https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/principal/scarborough-charter) and consistent with the recommendations of the [Anti-Black Racism Task Force Final Report](https://people.utoronto.ca/inclusion/anti-racism-strategic-tables/anti-black-racism-task-force/)
* Opportunities for fostering an equitable, diverse and inclusive teaching and learning environment, reflecting the values articulated in existing institutional documents such as the [Statement on Equity, Diversity, and Excellence](https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/equity-diversity-and-excellence-statement-december-14-2006), the [Antisemitism Working Group Final Report](https://people.utoronto.ca/inclusion/anti-racism-strategic-tables/anti-semitism-working-group/), the aforementioned reports, and future institutional reports related to equity, diversity and inclusion

(Where appropriate) Unique curriculum or program innovations, creative components, significant high-impact practices

Initiatives taken to enhance the quality of the program and the associated learning and teaching environment.

## Program requirements

1. Appropriateness of the program’s structure and the requirements to meet its objectives and program-level learning outcomes, including the structure and requirements of any identified streams (undergraduate), fields or concentrations (graduate)

Appropriateness of the program’s structure, requirements and program-level learning outcomes in meeting [the institution’s applicable undergraduate or graduate Degree Level Expectations](https://www.vpacademic.utoronto.ca/academic-programs/degree-diploma-certificate-programs/degree-level-expectations/)

Appropriateness and effectiveness of the mode(s) of delivery (i.e., means or medium used in delivering a program; e.g., lecture format, distance, online, synchronous/asynchronous, problem-based, compressed part-time, flex-time, multi-campus, inter-institutional collaboration or other non-standard forms of delivery) to facilitate students’ successful completion of the program-level learning outcomes

Ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study and is appropriate for the level of the program

## Program requirements for graduate programs only

1. Clear rationale for program length that ensures that students can complete the program-level learning outcomes and requirements within the time required

Evidence that each graduate student in the program is required to take all of the course requirements from among graduate-level courses; evidence of sufficient graduate-level courses that students will be able to meet this requirement

For research-focused graduate programs, clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion

## Assessment of teaching and learning

1. Appropriateness and effectiveness of the methods for assessing student achievement of the program-level learning outcomes and degree level expectations

Appropriateness and effectiveness of the plans to monitor and assess:

* The overall quality of the program
* Whether the program is achieving in practice its proposed objectives
* Whether its students are achieving the program-level learning outcomes
* How the resulting information will be documented and subsequently used to inform continuous program improvement

## Admission requirements

1. Appropriateness of the program’s admission requirements given the program’s objectives and program-level learning outcomes

Sufficient explanation of alternative requirements, if applicable, for admission into a graduate, second-entry or undergraduate program, e.g., minimum grade point average, additional languages or portfolios and how the program recognizes prior work or learning experience

## Resources

In making assessments related to resources here and in 1.7, reviewers must recognize the institution's autonomy in determining priorities for funding, space and faculty allocation.

Given the program’s class sizes and cohorts as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

1. Participation of a sufficient number and quality of core faculty who are competent to teach and/or supervise in and achieve the goals of the program and foster the appropriate academic environment

If applicable, discussion/explanation of the role and approximate percentage of adjunct and sessional faculty/limited term appointments used in the delivery of the program and the associated plans to ensure the sustainability of the program and quality of the student experience (see [Quality Assurance Framework Guidance](https://oucqa.ca/guide/guidance-on-sessional-adjunct-faculty-qaf-2-1-2-6-and-5-1-3-1-6/))

If required, provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities

Adequacy of the administrative unit’s utilization of existing human, physical and financial resources

Evidence that there are adequate resources to sustain the quality of scholarship and research activities produced by students, including library support, information technology support and laboratory access

## Resources for graduate programs only

In making assessments related to resources here and in 1.6, reviewers must recognize the institution's autonomy in determining priorities for funding, space and faculty allocation.

Given the program’s class sizes and cohorts as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

1. Evidence that faculty have the recent research or professional/clinical expertise needed to sustain the program, promote innovation and foster an appropriate intellectual climate

Where appropriate to the program, evidence that financial assistance for students will be sufficient to ensure adequate quality and numbers of students

Evidence of how supervisory loads will be distributed, in light of qualifications and appointment status of the faculty

## Quality and other indicators

1. Evidence of the quality of the faculty (e.g., qualifications, funding, honours, awards, research, innovation and scholarly record; appropriateness of collective faculty expertise to contribute substantively to the program and commitment to student mentoring)

* The quality of the scholarship of the faculty, and the degree to which that scholarship is brought to bear in teaching

Any other evidence that the program and faculty will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience

Quality indicators related to students (e.g., grade level for admission; applications and registrations; attrition/retention rates; times-to-completion; final year academic achievement; graduation rates; scholarly output; success rates in provincial and national scholarships; competitions; academic awards; student in-course reports on teaching; and commitment to professional and transferable skills)

Quality indicators related to program graduates (e.g., rates of graduation; employment six months and two years after graduation; postgraduate study; “skills match”; and alumni reports on program quality when available and when permitted by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). Auditors will be instructed that these items may not be available and applicable to all programs.)

Any additional indicators of quality identified by the division or academic unit, including but not limited to data to support the assessment of progress towards fulfilling the plans, priorities and commitments identified in 1.1.a and 1.1.b

How the program compares to the best in its field among peer institutions in Canada, North America and internationally, including areas of strength and opportunities

## Program undergoing its first cyclical review (if applicable)

1. Commissioning officer to add, if applicable, terms to address any areas the new program monitoring report identified for consideration in the first cyclical review of the new program, along with any items the Quality Council identified for follow-up in its approval letter.

# Faculty/Research

* Scope, quality and relevance of faculty research activities.
* Appropriateness of the level of activity relative to national and international comparators.
* Appropriateness of research activities for the undergraduate and graduate students in the Faculty.
* Faculty complement plan.
* Appropriateness and effectiveness of the academic unit’s use of existing human resources. In making this assessment, reviewers must recognize the institution's autonomy in determining priorities for funding, space and faculty allocation.

# Relationships

* Strength of the morale of faculty, students and staff.
* Scope and nature of relationships with cognate Faculties, academic departments and units.
* Extent to which the Faculty, department or unit has developed or sustained fruitful partnerships with other universities and organizations in order to foster research, creative professional activities and to deliver teaching programs.
* Scope and nature of the Faculty, department or unit’s relationship with external government, academic and professional organizations.
* Social impact of the Faculty, department or unit in terms of outreach and impact locally and nationally.

# Organizational and Financial Structure

* The appropriateness and effectiveness of the Faculty, department or unit’s organizational and financial structure.
* The appropriateness with which resource allocation, including space and infrastructure support, has been managed. In making this assessment, reviewers must recognize the institution's autonomy in determining priorities for funding, space and faculty allocation.
* Opportunities for new revenue generation.

# Long-Range Planning Challenges

* Consistency with the University’s academic plan.
* Appropriateness of:
  + - Complement plan, including balance of tenure-stream and non-tenure stream faculty
    - Enrolment strategy
    - Student financial aid
    - Development/fundraising initiatives
    - Management and leadership.

# International Comparators

Assessment of the Faculty, department or unit and the program(s) under review relative to the best in Canada/North America and internationally, including areas of strength and opportunities.