Policy Title:	ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEWS	**Area of Responsibility:** **VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC**	
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St. Clair College Academic Program Review Policy

Preamble

The Minister's Binding Policy Directive issued under the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities clearly establishes that quality assurance is a responsibility of every college. Under that Directive, "**Colleges are to establish mechanisms for the review of their programs of instruction to ensure ongoing quality, relevancy and currency**." (Section F. 1 of the Framework for Programs of Instruction).

The Senior Operating Group at St. Clair College has identified program review and updating as one way the college will be pursuing the objectives of academic quality assurance. The goal is to have in place a quality assurance process that ensures program quality, relevance and currency as well as cost effectiveness.

The essential function of the program review process is to provide a method for ongoing quality improvement in the design, development and delivery of curriculum to our learners. By constantly reviewing our programs and their delivery to our learners, we ensure that they are current, relevant, cost effective and meeting the needs of learners and employers. Specifically it is important to provide pathways by which our diverse community members achieve personal and career development.

Purpose

1. St. Clair College intends to support an ongoing quality improvement process by:

    1.1. Facilitating the improvement of programs and services through the development and updating of the program review process at the college.

    1.2. Assisting in the provision to those responsible for academic programming of access to a full range of relevant data and quality indicators intended to assist in the program review process.

    1.3. Building into the review process, firstly, internal mechanisms that permit a thorough review and analysis of academic programs by the faculty who design and deliver them

and, secondly a method that ensures the external review of the curriculum by employers and other community representatives who would hire our graduates.

1.4. Incorporating a process of consultation with our students/learners as part of the review process to ensure that the learning needs and styles of our learners are being met.

1.5. Monitoring the impact of the program review process and the implementation of action plans and decision-making resulting from the review process.

Two – Stage Academic Program Review Process; The academic program review process consists of:

- Firstly, an annual internal review by the coordinator and faculty of data and information relating to an academic program and
- Secondly, a periodic or cyclical external review of curriculum in the academic program occurring at least once in every two to five years.

2. For the purposes of the annual internal review, the program coordinator is responsible for coordinating and facilitating the review.

3. For the purposes of the cyclical external review the person responsible for coordinating and facilitating the review will be known as the external review coordinator. The program coordinator will normally be the external review coordinator but in appropriate circumstances, the Chair of the program, with the permission of the Vice President, Academic may appoint another faculty member to organize and coordinate the external review.

4. Normally, programs will be reviewed on an individual basis. However, where programs are very similar, share common curriculum or are "streamed" programs, any one or more of the Chair, program coordinator or faculty may recommend that more than one program should be reviewed together. On approval by the Vice President, Academic, combined reviews may be held. Given that much of the data needed to review the programs will be comparative, it is important that the need to combine more than one program in a review should be clear and necessary on an ongoing basis.

5. **Annual Internal Program Review Process**

The annual evaluation process will focus on, but not be limited to, continuous improvement of academic quality, occupational relevance, curriculum design and delivery, enrolments and admissions, costing and interest in the program.

5.1. On a yearly basis, data will be collected on all programs in order to provide an extensive picture of how programs are performing as indicated by that data. The annual program data will help Faculty, Coordinators and Chairs get a sense of how their programs are doing from year to year. It will give early indications when there are changes taking place

in the work or educational environment that would suggest a need for modifications to the program.

5.2. St. Clair College will provide information and data with respect to each College program as soon as they become available. This information and data will wherever possible consist of a range of historical and current data and quality indicators.

5.3. The office of the Assistant Vice President, Academic will provide templates for the annual on-going review to the School Chairs and the program coordinators as early in the fall semester as possible.

5.4. It is the responsibility of the program coordinator with the assistance of the department's administrative assistants, if necessary, to complete the annual program review template after reviewing the appropriate data. The coordinator has from the receipt of the template the end of April to ensure the completion of the template based on the available data.

5.5. The program coordinator will during the month of May call a meeting of faculty for the purpose of reviewing and confirming the responses in the template and the data on which those responses are based. This meeting will also develop an Action Plan, if necessary, to address any issues identified in the review.

  5.5.1. The timelines for the meeting of the coordinator with the faculty to review the data and the program review template may be modified to suit the convenience of the coordinator and faculty providing that the program review template and the Action Plan are submitted to the Chair by the first week of June as provided by this policy.

5.6. The meeting of the coordinator with the program faculty should, if possible, include the following people:

- All full-time faculty who regularly teach in the program
- Wherever possible non-full-time faculty who regularly teach in the program will be invited to participate in the review
- A faculty representative from General Education, English, Mathematics, or other courses provided to the program by other departments will be invited to participate.
- The program Chair, as appropriate and available

5.7. The program Chair will ensure that the internal program review committees meet as needed to complete the analysis and review of each of the school's academic programs and that the template and Action Plan are properly completed in a timely manner.

5.8. The completed program review template together with appropriate any Action Plan must be submitted by the Chair to the Assistant Vice President, Academic by no later than the end of the third week of June at the end of that academic year.

6. **Data and other Information:** The annual data will be as comprehensive as possible and will include the following:

   7.1. **Program Quality and Student Success Data**: The following data will be collected on individual programs to measure quality and student success:

      7.1.1. First Year Enrolment for the current academic year
      7.1.2. Total Enrolment for the current academic year
      7.1.3. Applications and Applications per Seat for the current academic year
      7.1.4. Graduate Placement for the last available academic year
      7.1.5. Graduates placement in related jobs for the last available year
      7.1.6. Graduate Satisfaction from the last available KPI survey
      7.1.7. Student Satisfaction from the last available KPI survey
      7.1.8. Employer Satisfaction from the last available KPI survey
      7.1.9. Retention from first to second semester and from first to second year according to the latest available data
      7.1.10. Graduation Rates according to the latest available data
      7.1.11. Program Average GPA for the latest available academic year
      7.1.12. The latest available demographic data on students registered in the program
      7.1.13. Where available, other relevant data as determined by the Chair, coordinator and program faculty (for example, data or input concerning the preparation for and access to further education)
      7.1.14. Feedback from the students including the Instructional Feedback Survey and any feedback process conducted by the faculty such as focus groups.

8. **Financial data**

   8.1. Program Costing Data which includes program revenues (grant and tuition) as well as program expenditures
   8.2. Program specific capital cost expenditures

9. Components of the curriculum that have been reviewed either by the faculty or by the external review of curriculum during the previous or current academic year should be identified together with any action plans or recommendations for modifications.

   9.1. Data and information on current trends in the field, at other colleges, including projections on future trends, environmental scans, employment data and projections, labour market analysis and environmental scans should be reviewed and analyzed for the impact on the academic program. This information or data may be supplied by the Vice President, Academic, the Office of Quality Assurance, the program Chair or the faculty members of the internal review committee.

   9.2. Annual internal reviews from recent years, Action Plans, and any external reviews of curriculum should also be considered.

10. **Curriculum Review:** In addition to the data and information outlined in the previous pages, the internal review committee should conduct a review of the curriculum and should include the following items in that review:

   10.1.   Currency and relevancy of vocational program and course outcomes
   10.2.   Adequacy and completeness of vocational course outcomes
   10.3.   Appropriateness of admission criteria
   10.4.   Appropriateness of graduation standards
   10.5.   Prerequisites, co requisites, minimum grades, exit criteria etc.
   10.6.   Academic weight and balance of student workload
   10.7.   Appropriateness of each of the courses, contents and the sequence of courses
   10.8.   Prescribed learning resources and the cost to students (textbooks etc)
   10.9.   College supplied equipment resources
   10.10.   Integration of current technology in curriculum
   10.11.   Unnecessary or outdated curriculum in the vocational courses
   10.12.   Gaps in the curriculum or areas of learning that need to be incorporated
   10.13.   Up-to-date program mapping
   10.14.   Reliability and validity of assessment techniques and instruments
   10.15.   Curriculum delivery techniques and use of appropriate learning methodologies
   10.16.   Integration of appropriate technology as an instructional tool
   10.17.   Incorporation of cultural competencies and the awareness of diversity
   10.18.   Internationalization of curriculum
   10.19.   Attention to linguistic challenges
   10.20.   Course outlines updated including details of assessments and weighting
   10.21.   Curriculum meets general education guidelines
   10.22.   Incorporation of appropriate essential employability skills
   10.23.   Course outcomes properly drafted
   10.24.   Other curriculum items as determined by internal reviewers

11. **Program Charts for the next academic year:** As part of the internal program review process relating to curriculum, the coordinator of the program will submit a Program Chart that sets out the courses and the hours that will be included in the program for the next academic year.

   11.1.   The Program Chart will be submitted to the Chair of the School in which the program is housed by the end of January.

   11.2.   The Chair will review the Program Chart with the coordinator and will authorize the chart for use in the next academic year.

   11.3.   The Chairs of each school will submit the approved Program Charts to the office of the Assistant Vice President, Academic by no later than the end of the first week of February.

   11.4.   Once the Program Charts are submitted to the Office of the Assistant Vice President, Academic and approved, the data contained in these charts will be communicated to the Office of the Registrar.

    11.4.1.   No further modifications to the curriculum structure of an academic program may be made after the submission and acceptance of the Program Charts without the express permission of Vice President, Academic.

        11.4.1.1. The permission of the Vice President, Academic to modify the curriculum after the submission of the Program Charts in the second week of February will be granted only in very exceptional circumstances.

        11.4.1.2. In order to obtain the permission of the Vice President, Academic, a new Program Chart with the required changes must be submitted to the office of the Assistant Vice President, Academic together with a rationale as to why it needs to be changed from the Program Chart that was submitted in February.

12. **Previous Annual Reviews:** The internal review will review the Action Plan from the previous year and identify those items which have been completed and those which have not. Where items have not been completed or implemented, the internal review should identify the reasons for non-completion or non-implementation.

13. **Outcome of Internal Review and Action Plan**: After reviewing and analyzing the curriculum, data, quality indicators and any curriculum reviews; the internal program review will determine whether there is a current need for modifications. Reviewers should indicate the assumptions and rationale for the conclusions reached in their analysis of the data, quality indicators, curriculum review, or other appropriate information.

    13.1.   Where the reviewers have concerns relating to the relevance, reliability and accuracy of data, a critique should be included in the review template relating to these issues. The reviewers should clearly identify the nature and basis of these concerns.

    13.2.   If modifications are recommended, the internal program review committee will develop an Action Plan that documents the required changes and identifies any required equipment and other resources.

    13.3.   If the interpretation of the data and quality indicators suggests a need for further review but modifications are not immediately required, the Action Plan will indicate areas where faculty may need to focus attention in the design, content and delivery of curriculum.

    13.4.   At the earliest opportunity, the program coordinator will submit the Action Plan to the Program Advisory Committee for any input that its members may wish to provide. It is recognized that this step may not in some cases occur before the submission of the Action Plan to the Vice President, Academic. However, the program coordinator should develop the Action Plan and submit the plan to the Program Advisory Committee for input by no later than the end of November in the next academic year. The Program Advisory Committee should have full access to all the data and quality indicators.

14. **Receipt of Internal Reviews by the College:** By the end of the last week of May, the coordinator of each program will submit the completed Program Review Template including any required Action Plan as well as any advice received from the Program Advisory Committee to the program Chair.

   14.1.   The internal program review together with any Action Plan resulting from the review must be reviewed by the Chair of the program who will provide his or her input to the review and Action Plan. Specifically the Chair will identify obstacles or issues relating to the implementation of the Action Plan.

   14.2.   By the end of the second week of June, the Chair will submit the completed Program Review Template together with any Action Plan and the Chair's report on the review and Action Plan, to the Office of the Assistant Vice President, Academic.

   14.3.   The Office of the Assistant Vice President, Academic will assemble the internal program reviews and associated materials into a comprehensive report organized by schools for archiving and for submission to the Office of the Vice President, Academic.

15. **Cyclical External Program Review:** The external review is designed to provide a more detailed and thorough review of the vocational and essential employability skills outcomes in the curriculum of academic programs.

   15.1.   This external review of the curriculum will be based on a consideration of ***academic quality, occupational relevance, currency and continuing need*** for the existing curriculum components and the program itself.

   15.2.   This review does **not** include a review of general education content or courses.

   15.3.   Where an existing, mandated process for external certification already exists, the program Chair may recommend to the Vice President, Academic that the results of the certification process would meet the requirement for an external review.

   15.3.1.   On approval by the Vice President, Academic an academic program with an approved accreditation process will not need to engage in a periodic or cyclical external review.

16. **Cyclical External Review Committee Membership:** The cyclical external review committee shall be composed of:

   16.1.   1 to 2 members of the Program Advisory Committee, one of whom will be the Chair of the External Review Committee. The naming of the members of the Program Advisory Committee to server on the external review panel is subject to the approval of the Vice President, Academic both in terms of naming the Chair as

well as the number of members to serve on the external review committee. The decision of the Vice President, Academic is final.

16.2.   3 to 8 members of the profession or industry that would typically hire the graduates of the program. These members should not have any direct association with the college or with the Program Advisory Committee for the program that is being reviewed. In the case of a question relating to whether an association of a proposed member of the external review committee would disqualify the proposed member, the Vice President, Academic shall review the nature of the association and determine that person's suitability. The decision of the Vice President, Academic is final.

16.3.   2 to 3 persons who are graduates of the program that is going to be reviewed. Persons serving on the review committee in the capacity of being a graduate of the program must also be working and have worked for at least one year in the appropriate industry or profession at the time of the external review.

16.4.   The review panel may have fewer than 6 members if the Vice President, Academic consents to having fewer than 6 but there should be at least one graduate that meets the requirements of the preceding paragraph.

16.5.   The program Chair and the review coordinator must attend the external review meetings and participate as resource persons for the review.

16.6.   Recommendations of the external review committee must have the support of at least half of the external review committee members plus one who are in attendance or participating before they will be recorded as a recommendation of the committee.

17. **The Process for the external review:** The following process will be used for the cyclical comprehensive review:

14.1   The Vice President, Academic, the Assistant Vice President, Academic and the Office of Quality Assurance will be responsible for identifying and scheduling programs to undergo the cyclical external program review and also for fast tracking programs for review if needed.

14.2   For each program identified as undertaking an external review, a review coordinator will be identified for the program by the Chair of the appropriate school.

14.3   With the assistance of the program school's resources and administrative personnel, the review coordinator will schedule the external review meeting and ensure that the committee members receive copies of the program description and course outlines as well as any related materials at least one week prior to the review meeting. Data and materials submitted to the external reviewers will reflect the purposes of the external review.

14.4   It is the responsibility of the program Chair to ensure that appropriate arrangements and preparations are made.

15. **Curriculum Review and Analysis**: An essential element in the external review is a comprehensive assessment of the curriculum. Though other components may be added at the discretion of the review coordinator, the program Chair or the external review committee, it is expected that the external review will conduct a thorough review of the vocational curriculum as outlined in this policy including the following:

15.1   Currency and relevancy of vocational program and course outcomes
15.2   Adequacy and completeness of vocational course outcomes
15.3   The appropriateness of prerequisites, co-requisites, minimum grades, exit criteria etc.
15.4   Academic weight and balance of student workload
15.5   Appropriateness of each of the courses, contents and the sequence of courses
15.6   Perceived appropriateness of prescribed learning resources (textbooks etc)
15.7   Appropriateness of supplied equipment and resources
15.8   Appropriate Integration of current technology in the curriculum
15.9   Unnecessary or outdated curriculum in the vocational courses
15.10   Gaps in the curriculum or areas of learning that need to be incorporated in the program

16. **External Review and Report**: The Chair of the External Review Committee together with the program Chair shall ensure that the recommendations of the review committee are properly recorded for the purpose of submitting them to the College. It is not necessary to record detailed minutes of the meeting. However, the precise recommendations relating to the individual courses and the program itself need to be recorded with clarity.

16.1.   Generally the external program reviewers would be expected to meet together but virtual meetings using communication technologies may be used as appropriate to conduct some or all of the external review if it better serves the convenience and needs of the external reviewers.

16.2.   The Chair of the external review committee shall submit the final recommendations to the program Chair. The program Chair shall review the recommendations and attach his or her analysis of the feasibility and viability of implementing the individual recommendations of the external review committee.

16.3.   The program Chair shall submit the final recommendations of the external review committee together with the Chairs analysis of the recommendations to the Assistant Vice President, Academic who will assemble and archive the external reports for the program.

16.4.   The Assistant Vice President will then transmit the recommendations of the external review committee to the Vice President, Academic.

Appendix A

Timelines for annual internal program review template

Date	End of last week of September	Fall and Winter Semesters	May	End of May	End of the second week of June	End of June or early July
Activity	Chair and coordinators receive Annual Internal Review Template.	Coordinator completes various components of the Annual Internal Review templates by the end of April	Coordinator calls meeting of Internal Review Committee and completes appropriate components of review process including final analysis of data and information and the development of an Action Plan. The meeting of the internal review committee and the development of the Action Plan should be complete by the end of May. .	Program Coordinator submits completed Internal Review Template together with any Action Plan to program Chair by the end of May.	The program Chair completes his or her observations, recommendations and report on the Review and Action Plan. Program Chair submits completed Internal Review Template together with any Action Plan and his or her observations, recommendations and report to the AVPA	AVPA submits assembled Internal Reviews, Action Plans and Chairs reports to VPA.

Timelines for submission of Program Chart for next academic year

Date	Fall Semester	January	End of the first week of February	End of Second Week of February
Activity	Coordinator and faculty review the program curriculum and decide if they wish revisions for the next academic year. (Planning Stage)	Coordinator develops Program Chart and consults with Chair. Chair approves Program Chart for next academic year.	Chair submits Program Chart of AVPA office.	AVPA with approval of VPA submits Program Charts to Registrar's Office. (No changes to program courses for next academic year permitted after submission to Registrar's Office

Timelines for periodic external review of program curriculum

Date	End of August	End of September	Fall and/or Winter Semester	After completion of external review	End of second week of June	First of May (one year later)
Activity	Office of AVPA prepares list of programs to undergo an external review during the next academic year and transmits it to the Chairs.	Chair identifies external review coordinator for all programs being reviewed in this academic year, submits names to AVPA.	Review coordinator prepares for, organizes and completes external review process.	Chair of external review submits recommendations to program Chair who then adds his or her analysis of the recommendations	Chair submits recommendations and Chair's analysis to AVPA for archiving and transmission to VPA	Follow up by AVPA on implementation recommendations and other outcomes.