



DEGREE REVIEW, REVISION, AND RENEWAL PROCEDURE

Approved by: Academic Coordinating Committee

Authorizer: Executive Director, Academic Administration

Reference Code: D4 V5

Effective Date: 9/1/2007

PROCEDURE STATEMENT:

Conestoga recognizes that regularly scheduled formal degree program review is central to ensuring quality and to the meeting of community, employer, government, and student needs. The process of reviewing degree programs is subject to a rational approach that, in addition to considering the program curriculum, takes into accounts all administrative areas and operational functions of Conestoga that are affected by and contribute to degree program design and delivery.

Degree programs are reviewed within a context of internal and external scrutiny, and follow a well-defined path from initial discussion to final implementation. Degree programs must meet all of the Program Evaluation Standard Benchmarks as required by the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB). See Appendix 2 for the full text.

This procedure defines how Conestoga degree programs are reviewed to ensure approval by both internal and external bodies.

SCOPE:

This procedure applies to all degree program reviews.

DEFINITIONS:

Action Plan Response: The School's response, including timeline, to recommendations made by the Program Evaluation Committee in their report. The Action Plan Response is presented at DMC before inclusion in the MTCU/PEQAB renewal submission.

Core and Noncore Courses: Core courses provide developed knowledge and critical understanding of the key concepts, methodologies, current advances, theoretical approaches and assumptions within a discipline. Noncore courses provide developed knowledge and critical understanding from outside of the discipline, an interdisciplinary perspective.

DMC: Degree Management Committee is comprised of senior academic administrators and is responsible for vetting all proposed degree program development and revisions.

Degree Program: A degree program is a planned and coordinated selection of degree-level courses delivered to an identified student body, at the successful conclusion of which an appropriate degree credential will be awarded.

Program Evaluation Committee: The Program Evaluation Committee is required to review the degree program as part of the MTCU/PEQAB renewal process, every five to seven years. The committee includes a Chair and one or two other senior academics hired by the School.

Program Evaluation Committee Report: The report created after review of the Self Study, Redesign Report (if applicable), and a site visit. The Report includes recommendations and concerns noted by the Committee during the review and this Report is included in the MTCU/PEQAB renewal submission.

Evidence of Student Work: Documentation in the form of a selection of student work that is gathered annually and kept on file for MTCU/PEQAB review and degree program renewal. Documentation is current to the most recent academic year leading up to the individual degree renewal deadline. Refer to Appendix for details. In the case of accreditation requirements, Schools are also required to follow the requirements of the accreditation bodies.

Learning Outcomes: Learning outcomes represent culminating demonstrations of learning and achievement. In addition, learning outcomes are interrelated and cannot be viewed in isolation of one another. As such, they should be viewed as a comprehensive whole. They describe performances that demonstrate that significant integrated learning by graduates of the program has been achieved and verified. – Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, “Published College Program Standards.” Learning outcomes can also be referred as ‘graduate attributes’, in terms of the knowledge, values, and skills possessed and demonstrated by graduates of degree programs.

PAC: The Program Advisory Committee provides advice on academic program development, review and effectiveness, changes/trends in business and industry affecting programs, students and graduates, technological implications of changes/trends, employment prospects etc. Refer to PAC Guidelines for membership and terms of reference.

PEQAB: The Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board is an arms-length advisory agency that makes recommendations to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities of Ontario on applications for ministerial consent under the terms of the Post- secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000.

PEQAB Program Renewal Submission: The PEQAB Program Renewal Submission includes detailed documents that commit to the continued delivery of a degree program that meets all of PEQAB's degree-level standards. Refer to PEQAB Renewal template.

PEQAB Quality Assessment Panel (QAP): The QAP panel, as established by PEQAB, reviews the PEQAB Program Proposal Submission or Program Renewal Submission documents, conducts a site visit or desk review, and writes a report on the viability of the proposed degree program or degree renewal. QAP members are senior academics with appropriate terminal credentials in the degree program's field of study. Academic Administration may put forward nominations to PEQAB based on recommendations by the Schools. Refer to PEQAB Assessor Nominations for criteria.

PEQAB Quality Assessment Panel (QAP) Report: The QAP Report documents the strengths and weaknesses of a degree program submission and includes panel recommendations.

Redesign Report: An in-depth report on the proposed redesign of a degree program based on faculty, staff, student, graduate, PAC, Self-Study, and Program Evaluation Committee recommendations. The Redesign Report is included in the MTCU/PEQAB renewal submission. Refer to Redesign Report template.

Self-Study: An in-depth review of the degree program completed by the faculty and administrators as part of the MTCU/PEQAB renewal process, every five to seven years. The Self Study is integral to the MTCU/PEQAB renewal submission. Refer to Self-Study template.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Timeline Reference: Degree Review & Renewal Procedure Map

Revision Procedures:

When contemplating any change or revision to a degree program, Schools are advised to contact Academic Administration for advice on how to proceed.

Any major revisions to a degree program during the period of consent must be submitted to the MTCU for assessment and PEQAB review.

Minor changes, to maintain currency and program relevance, may occur with PAC and DMC approval. See MTCU Memorandum, September 10, 2004, *Changes to Programs During the Period of Consent*.

Review Procedures:

Throughout the year, various review processes are conducted by the School.

1. Every semester, core and noncore faculty collect the designated Evidence of Student Work which is kept for MTCU/PEQAB renewal processes. Documentation must be kept current to the most recent academic year leading up to the individual degree renewal deadline. Refer to Appendix 1 for details. In the case of

accreditation requirements, Schools are also required to follow the requirements of the accreditation bodies.

2. Meeting a minimum of twice a year, the degree program PAC reviews curriculum and/or the Program Statistics Report and approves any minor program changes.
3. Accreditation bodies meet to review the program, where applicable.
4. At the end of every academic year, course outlines are updated as needed. Minor changes are approved by the appropriate academic manager.

Renewal

Procedures:

Two years before consent expiry, the process for degree renewal intensifies. The School, in consultation with Academic Administration, begins procedures that lead up to program renewal by the MTCU.

1. The Executive Dean, Chair, Program Coordinator and faculty conduct an in-depth Self Study of the program that includes an Environmental Scan and a review of the program's learning outcomes. Refer to Self-Study template for assessment criteria.
2. A Program Evaluation Committee is established by the Executive Dean and Chair of the program. After vetting by Academic Administration, the Self Study is sent to the members of this committee at least one week prior to the Site Visit.
3. The site visit is organized by Academic Administration. Refer to Degree Program Renewal Site Visit Agenda.
4. After the site visit, the Program Evaluation Committee creates a Report including recommendations and concerns noted by the Committee during the review and submits the Report to Academic Administration.*
5. The School responds with an Action Plan Response, including timeline, which is presented at DMC before inclusion in the final PEQAB renewal submission.
6. The final PEQAB renewal submission will include the Self Study, Redesign Report (if applicable), Program Evaluation Committee Report(s), Action Plan Response, and documentation showing that the degree program meets all of PEQAB's degree-level standards and approved learning outcomes. Refer to PEQAB Renewal template. Academic Administration, the Executive Dean, Chair and Program Faculty will be involved in the creation of the final submission.
7. PEQAB determines whether a site visit or desk review is required of a degree program and establishes a Quality Assessment Panel (QAP). In the case of a site visit:
 - a. Academic Administration will coordinate the event with the QAP members, administration, faculty, and staff. The School will arrange to have student representatives, graduates, and PAC members available during the site visit and ensure that all Evidence of Student Work is organized and on-hand for review by the QAP members.

8. After the site visit or desk review, the QAP submits their report to PEQAB. The School is required to respond to this report and both report and response are given to PEQAB's Board for their consideration.
9. PEQAB's Board sends their recommendation for consideration to the MTCU. After review by the MTCU Board, the final recommendation is sent to the Minister.
10. The Minister's letter of renewal approval is sent to Academic Administration and the School is informed.

* As a result of the Self Study process, or as a result of recommendations made by the Program Evaluation Committee, the School may decide that a major program redesign is warranted. If this is the case, the creation of a Redesign Report is necessary. Schools must inform Academic Administration before proceeding. Refer to Redesign Report template.

Responsibilities

Revisions:

- Schools will contact Academic Administration for advice on how to correctly proceed.
- Academic Administration will coordinate the submission of program amendments to PEQAB, as necessary.

Reviews:

- Schools are responsible for conducting all review procedures and meetings as required. Schools are responsible for Annual Program Review.
- Schools must keep all documentation and student work pertaining to the degree review/revision for reference during scheduled degree program renewals, in accordance with MTCU renewal requirements.
- Academic Administration will participate as necessary in PAC and review meetings.
- The Office of Institutional Research and Planning is responsible for providing the Program Statistics Report on an annual basis.

Renewals:

- Schools are responsible for the timely completion of all renewal processes, procedures and documentation for submission in advance of consent expiry deadlines. Schools are responsible for selecting an appropriate Program Evaluation Committee.
- Academic Administration, in consultation with the School representative(s), will coordinate all degree program renewals and submission of documents, in accordance with MTCU renewal requirements. Academic Administration will advise Schools of consent expiry deadlines and will liaise with the MTCU and PEQAB as necessary. Academic Administration will also participate as necessary in PAC and renewal meetings.
- The Program Evaluation Committee is responsible for reviewing the Self Study, and Redesign Report if applicable, and participating in a site visit that includes discussion with stakeholders regarding the delivery of the program. In doing so, the Committee

is ensuring that program curriculum and delivery is consistent with degree-level standards and meeting the approved program learning outcomes. The Program Evaluation Committee contributes to program viability and makes recommendations to assist the School in preparations for renewal submission to the MTCU. Based on the documentation and the site visit, the Program Evaluation Committee will provide consensus feedback in a Report submitted in a timely manner to the School.

REFERENCES:

Action Plan Response template
Degree Program Review & Renewal Chart
Environmental Scan template
Degree Program Renewal Site Visit Agenda
PAC Guidelines
PEQAB Documentation
Program Evaluation Committee Suggested Site Visit Agenda
Program Evaluation Committee Review template
Redesign Report template
Self-Study template

REVISION LOG:

Nov. 12 2008 Update to Definitions
Mar. 24 2009 Update to Definitions and Procedure
Apr. 7 2009 Degree Management Committee - Approved
Apr. 15 2009, Policies and Procedures Committee – Approved
Apr. 29 2009, Academic Coordinating Committee – Approved
Feb. 2 2010, Update Definitions and School Responsibilities
Feb. 25 2013 Policies and Procedures Committee – revisions reviewed
Apr. 3, 2013 Policies and Procedures Committee – revisions approved
Apr. 10, 2013 Academic Coordinating Committee – revisions approved
Oct. 16 2014 Update to Appendices

APPENDIX 1 – EVIDENCE OF STUDENT WORK

The PEQAB benchmark for assessment of student work is stated in Section 9, Program Evaluation Standard, as follows:

Benchmarks:

1. The college has a formal, institutionally approved policy and procedure for the periodic review of programs that embody the following characteristics:

k) assessment of individual student work in the terminal stage of the program that reflects exemplary, average and minimally acceptable performance and demonstrates that the degree level standard has been achieved

(PEQAB Handbook for Ontario Colleges, 2014, page 29)

Note: Discussions are currently taking place with PEQAB regarding future requirements for evidence of student work. *October 2014*

Conestoga Definition:

Evidence of Student Work: Documentation in the form of a selection of student work that is gathered annually and kept on file for MTCU/PEQAB review and degree program renewal. Documentation is current to the most recent academic year leading up to the individual degree renewal deadline.

In the case of accreditation requirements, Schools are also required to follow the requirements of the accreditation bodies.

EVIDENCE OF STUDENT WORK INCLUDES:

- a discrete selection of representative courses (Core and Noncore) across all four years of the program design, as chosen by the School
- all fourth year project, thesis and capstone courses
- evidence of a progression in the breadth and depth of knowledge over the four years of the program design;
- proof that the learning outcomes have been met; and
- documentation current to the most recent academic year leading up to the review and/or renewal.

Within these selected courses, the academic evidence includes:

- all assignments, projects/presentations, and evaluation handouts given by the instructor to students;
- all tests, quizzes and exam questions given by the instructor to students and answer sheets used by the instructor, and
- two examples per evaluation of student performance of an exemplary work, an average work, and a minimally acceptable work result (i.e. Mid-term Exam: “A” grade example, “B” grade example, and “C” grade example).

It is Conestoga’s goal to have all evidence of student work captured electronically on D2L.

Appendix 2 – Program Evaluation Standard (Handbook For Ontario Colleges, 2014, pp 28-29)

9. PROGRAM EVALUATION STANDARD

The quality of the proposed program is assured by procedures for periodic evaluation that meet the requirements outlined below²³.

Benchmarks:

1. The college has a formal, institutionally approved policy and procedure for the periodic review of programs that embody the following characteristics:
 - a) program reviews at regular intervals, normally not exceeding five to seven years. The first such evaluation should occur before a request for renewal of ministerial consent
 - b) criteria for program reviews that include:
 - i) assessment of the continuing consistency of the program with the college's mission, educational goals and long-range plan
 - ii) assessment of the learning outcome achievements of students/graduates by comparison with:
 - i. the program's stated learning outcome goals and standards
 - ii. the degree level standard
 - iii. the opinions of employers and students/graduates
 - iv. the standards of any related regulatory, accrediting or professional association
 - c) where appropriate, assessment of
 - i) graduate employment rates
 - ii) graduate satisfaction level
 - iii) employer satisfaction level
 - iv) student satisfaction level
 - v) graduation rate
 - vi) the default rate on the Ontario Student Assistance Program or other student loan plan
 - vii) student retention rates
 - d) assessment of the continuing relevance of the program to the field of practice it serves, including evidence of revisions made to adapt to changes in the field of practice
 - e) assessment of the continuing appropriateness of the method of delivery and curriculum for the program's educational goals and standards
 - f) assessment of the continuing appropriateness of admission requirements (i.e., achievement level, subject preparation) for the program's educational goals and standards
 - g) assessment of the continuing appropriateness of the program's structure, method of delivery and curriculum for its educational goals and standards
 - h) assessment of the continuing adequacy of the methods used for evaluating student progress and achievement
 - i) assessment of the efficient and effective utilization and adequacy of existing human, physical, technological and financial resources
 - j) indicators of faculty performance, including the quality of teaching and supervision and demonstrable currency in the field of specialization

k) assessment of individual student work in the terminal stage of the program that reflects exemplary, average and minimally acceptable performance and demonstrates that the degree level standard has been achieved.

2. The program review procedure includes:

a) A self-study

A study undertaken, with student input, by faculty members and administrators of the program based on evidence relating to program performance against the criteria stated above, including strengths and weaknesses, desired improvements and future directions.

b) A Program Evaluation Committee

A committee struck by the senior administration to evaluate the program based on

i) the self-study

ii) a site visit during which members of the committee normally meet with faculty members, students, graduates, employers and administrators to gather information. A majority of the members must be senior academic peers (both scholars and administrators) with relevant expertise from both outside the college and internal to the college but outside the program, and free of any conflict of interest.²⁴

c) The report of the Program Evaluation Committee

The overarching purpose of the Program Evaluation Committee report is to assess program quality and recommend any changes needed to strengthen that quality. The report must be addressed to the senior administration and shared with the academic council, governing board, faculty members and students in the program, together with a plan of action responding to the recommendations in the report.

3. The implementation of the policy and procedures for the periodic review of programs

a) is aligned with the Board's requirements for such evaluations

b) achieves its intended aim of continuous improvement of the program(s).

²³ The following benchmarks are based on the criteria employed by Ontario public universities and Redeemer University College.

²⁴ A conflict of interest policy similar to that of the Board should be implemented in selecting members of a Program Evaluation Committee.