

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

SESSION:

Public
Non-Public

ACTION REQUESTED:

Decision
Discussion/Direction
Information

TO: Academic Council

DATE: May 23, 2023

PRESENTED BY: Lori Livingston, Provost and Vice-President Academic

SUBJECT: 2022-23 Quality Assurance Process & Program Annual Report

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

As part of the annual reporting process, the Centre for Institutional Quality Enhancement (CIQE) provides an annual report to Academic Council and the Board for information that provides a snapshot of quality assurance frameworks and enhancements, academic program development and a summary of the status of Ministry Program approvals of Ontario Tech programs.

The attached Quality Assurance Process and Program Annual Report (formerly named the CIQE Annual Report) outlines the quality assurance process and activities that have occurred over the past year that align our internal Quality Assurance processes with the Province's Quality Assurance principles and Framework.

IMPLICATIONS:

This is an annual report that is reported to Academic Council and the Board for information.

ALIGNMENT WITH MISSION, VISION, VALUES & STRATEGIC PLAN:

Supporting program innovations, new programs, and cyclical program review processes ensures program quality at the University is in keeping with the priorities in the Integrated Academic and Research Plan.

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

2022-23 Quality Assurance Process & Program Annual Report

Quality Assurance Process and Program Annual Report

April 2022 – March 2023

Centre for Institutional Quality Enhancement (CIQE)

Summary: Quality Assurance Process

The Provost is responsible for overseeing the implementation and administration of the quality assurance process. The day to day management of the process resides with the Centre for Institutional Quality Enhancement (CIQE). The CIQE office along with the Deans and units implement the procedures that are outlined by the Quality Council's [Quality Assurance Framework](#).

As part of the annual reporting process, CIQE provides an annual report to Academic Council and the Board of Governors for information that provides a snapshot of quality frameworks and enhancements, academic program development and a summary of the status of Ministry Program approvals of Ontario Tech programs.

The following report outlines the academic program additions and changes related to the quality assurance process that occurred from April 2022 to March 2023.

Contents

1	Internal University Process	2
1.1	Notice of Intent.....	2
1.2	Minor Curricular Changes.....	2
1.3	Minor Program Adjustments	3
2	Quality Council Approval Process	4
2.1	New Program Approvals.....	4
2.2	Expedited Reviews	4
2.3	Major Modifications (Program Renewal and Significant Change).....	4
2.4	Cyclical Program Reviews.....	5
2.5	Cyclical Audit	7
3	Follow-Up Process	8
3.1	New Program Monitoring.....	8
3.2	18-month reports.....	8
4	Ministry of Colleges and Universities Approvals	10
	Summary	10

1 Internal University Process

1.1 Notice of Intent

For all new diploma and degree programs a Notice of Intent (NOI) must be submitted to the Provost for approval. Once approved by the Provost, the program has to go through the internal consultations and approvals, outlined in the columns below. Submission to Academic Council must be completed within two years of the NOI approval, however the process takes about 13-15 months to get through the internal approval process.

This year there were three (3) programs that underwent the NOI process. Their progress is indicated in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Notice of Intent Internal Progress

Program	Notice of Intent	Academic Resource Committee	CPRC/USC/GSC	Academic Council	Board of Governors
BASc Sustainability*	Aug-20	Jan-23			
MASc/MEng Mechatronics*	Nov-20	Nov-22			
PhD Cybersecurity	Feb-23				

*the Provost approved NOI extensions for these programs

1.2 Minor Curricular Changes

Minor curricular changes are changes at the course level only and do not impact overall program requirements. These include changes in elective offerings, course titles, descriptions, course delivery, or credit weighting of elective courses. For the reporting timeframe there were a total 531 minor curricular changes, these are provided by Faculty in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 Minor Curricular Changes by Faculty

Faculty	Minor Curricular Changes
Faculty of Business and Information Technology	27
Faculty of Education	99
Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science	21
Faculty of Health Sciences	57
Faculty of Science	27
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities	300

The majority of minor curricular changes occurred for mode of delivery with the addition of online or hybrid options. Expanding mode of delivery options for courses will allow for greater flexibility in course offerings should the need arise.

1.3 Minor Program Adjustments

Minor program adjustments impact overall program requirements but do not greatly impact the program learning outcomes. These include the introduction of new required courses, deletion of required courses, editorial changes to degree requirements or program learning outcomes, or changes or additions to new academic requirements. For the reporting timeframe there were a total 31 minor program adjustments, shown in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Minor Program Adjustments by Faculty

Faculty	Minor Program Adjustments
Faculty of Business and Information Technology	7
Faculty of Education	3
Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science	7
Faculty of Health Sciences	6
Faculty of Science	2
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities	6

2 Quality Council Approval Process

2.1 New Program Approvals

This applies to both new undergraduate and graduate programs and is used to secure the academic standards of new programs and to assure their ongoing improvement. The Quality Council reviews the programs, and has the final authority to approve or decline new programs.

There were no new programs submitted to the Quality Council for approval during the annual reporting timeframe.

Brief descriptions of all previously [approved programs](#) from the Quality Council can be found on the Quality Council's website.

2.2 Expedited Reviews

This applies to for-credit graduate diplomas. The Quality Council can also request this type of review for a new field in a graduate program, or request based on proposed major modifications of an existing program.

There were no programs submitted to the Quality Council for expedited review approval during the annual reporting timeframe.

2.3 Major Modifications (Program Renewal and Significant Change)

Major program modifications result in substantive changes to the nomenclature, program requirements, and/or program learning outcomes. These include significant changes to the learning outcome, faculty engaged in the delivery of the program, or the addition of a new field to an existing graduate program. A report of all major modifications is provided to the Quality Council annually in July.

Table 2.1 Major Modifications Governance Progress

Faculty	Program	Faculty Council	USC/GSC	Academic Council
Faculty of Education	MA, MEd, UG and GR Diploma, Education	Nov-23	Jan-23	Feb-23
	BA, Educational Studies	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-22
	BA, Educational Studies	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
	UG Diploma, Facilitating Adult Learning with Technology	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science	MEng, Automotive Engineering	Oct-23/Dec-23	Jan-23	Mar-23
	MEng, Electrical and Computer Engineering	Oct-23/Dec-23	Jan-23	Mar-23
	MEng, Mechanical Engineering	Oct-23/Dec-23	Jan-23	Mar-23
Faculty of Health Sciences	MScN, Nursing	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23

Faculty	Program	Faculty Council	USC/GSC	Academic Council
Faculty of Science	BSc, Biological Science, Environmental Toxicology	Dec-23	Dec-22	Jan-23
	BSc, Mathematics for Science and Industry	Dec-23	Jan-23	Feb-23
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities	BA, All programs	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
	BA, Communication and Digital Media Studies	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
	BA, Criminology and Justice	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
	MA, Criminology	Nov-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
	BA, Forensic Psychology	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
	BA, Legal Studies	Jan-23	Jan-23	Feb-23
	BA, Liberal Studies	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
	BA, Political Science	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
	BA, Psychology	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
BA, Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Minor	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	

2.4 Cyclical Program Reviews

As set by the Quality Council all existing undergraduate degree programs, graduate degree programs, and for-credit diploma programs are subject to review once every eight years.

The cyclical program review allows for an in-depth, critical look at the program and follows an [internal 2-year timeframe](#). The review involves the following six components:

- Review and enhancement of program learning outcomes;
- Development of a self-study brief;
- External evaluation to provide recommendations on program quality improvement;
- Internal responses to the external review and recommendations;
- Preparation and approval of a [Final Assessment Report \(FAR\)](#) and implementation plan; and
- Subsequent reporting on the implementation of recommendations (18-Month reports discussed under Follow-Up Process, Section 3.2 below)

The number of programs and the review cycle process they are currently in is provided in Table 2.2 below, presented by Faculty and degree level. The [program review schedule](#) is posted on the CIQE website for reference at any time.

Table 2.2 Cyclical Program Review Process Stage Summary

Level/Faculty	Self-Study	External Review	Total
Undergraduate	7	1	8
Faculty of Business and Information Technology	2		2
Faculty of Education			
Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science			
Faculty of Health Sciences	3		3
Faculty of Science	1		1
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities	1	1	2
Graduate	9	1	10
Faculty of Business and Information Technology	1		1
Faculty of Education			
Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science	3		3
Faculty of Health Sciences		1	1
Faculty of Science	3		3
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities	2		2

Programs that have finalized their internal portions of the process and have now submitted their FAR to University governance are listed in Table 2.3 below. Once all of the university governing bodies have been provided the report for information it is then submitted to Quality Council.

Table 2.3 Cyclical Program Review Governance Progress

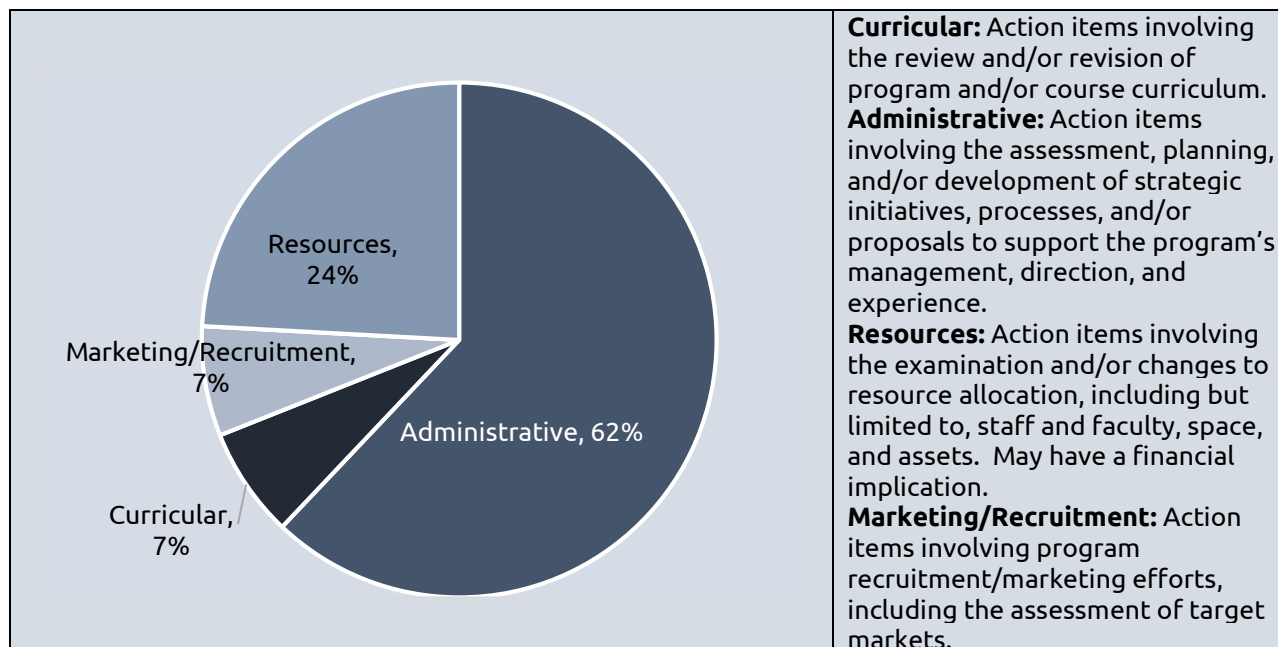
Program	Faculty Council	Academic Resource Committee	CPRC/USC/GSC	Academic Council	Board of Governors
BSc Computer Science	Sep-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22
MSc & PhD Computer Science	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23
BSc Physics	Apr-23	Apr-23			

There continues to be an overall increase in the number of reviewer recommendations, and subsequent action items coming out of the cyclical program reviews. A breakdown of the FAR thematic trends is outlined in the pie chart, Chart 2.1 below.

A total of 29 action items were reported at both the program and course level. A sample of action items are:

- Increase co-op participation;
- Analysis of retention rates;
- Expand upper-level course offerings;
- Provide additional supports for labs (equipment, training);
- Enhance connections with current students and alumni
- Increase online Library collections and engage Librarian in upper-year courses.

Chart 2.1 Final Assessment Report Thematic Trends



2.5 Cyclical Audit

The Quality Council approves each university’s [Institutional Quality Assurance Process \(IQAP\)](#) and conducts a periodic audit of how each university’s IQAP is administered to ensure that the manner in which each university conducts its program reviews conforms both to the university’s IQAP and the Quality Assurance Framework.

Ontario Tech had its last audit in the [winter of 2019-20](#), and we are scheduled to have our next audit in the winter of 2029-30.

3 Follow-Up Process

3.1 New Program Monitoring

In the first year of intake and one year after the launch of a program, an initial report is prepared for the Academic Resource Committee (ARC) that will review enrolment data, admission averages, and other key metrics to assess the new programs effectiveness.

The programs that underwent an intake report were:

- Bachelor of Health Administration
- Doctor of Education
- Master of Business Analytics and AI
- Bachelor of Science – Biological Science, Marine Biology Specialization

The programs that provided a one-year report were:

- Integrated Math and Computer Science
 - ARC has requested further monitoring of both intake and retention rates to be completed in one year.

3.2 18-month reports

Eighteen-month follow-up reports comment on the completion of action items outlined in the initial final assessment reports. ARC reviews these reports to gain insight into how many actions have been completed, and if not, for what reasons. Reviewing the completion level assists the committee in resource planning for how to support current programs under review not yet at the 18-month mark. It also allows for discussions with the program about the feasibility of action items outlined at the FAR stage of the review to ensure success 18-months later.

For 2022-2023, there were three 18-month follow-up reports as part of the cyclical program review process follow up.

- Bachelor of Science, Forensic Science
- Bachelor of Arts, Forensic Psychology
- Bachelor of Science, Applied and Industrial Mathematics

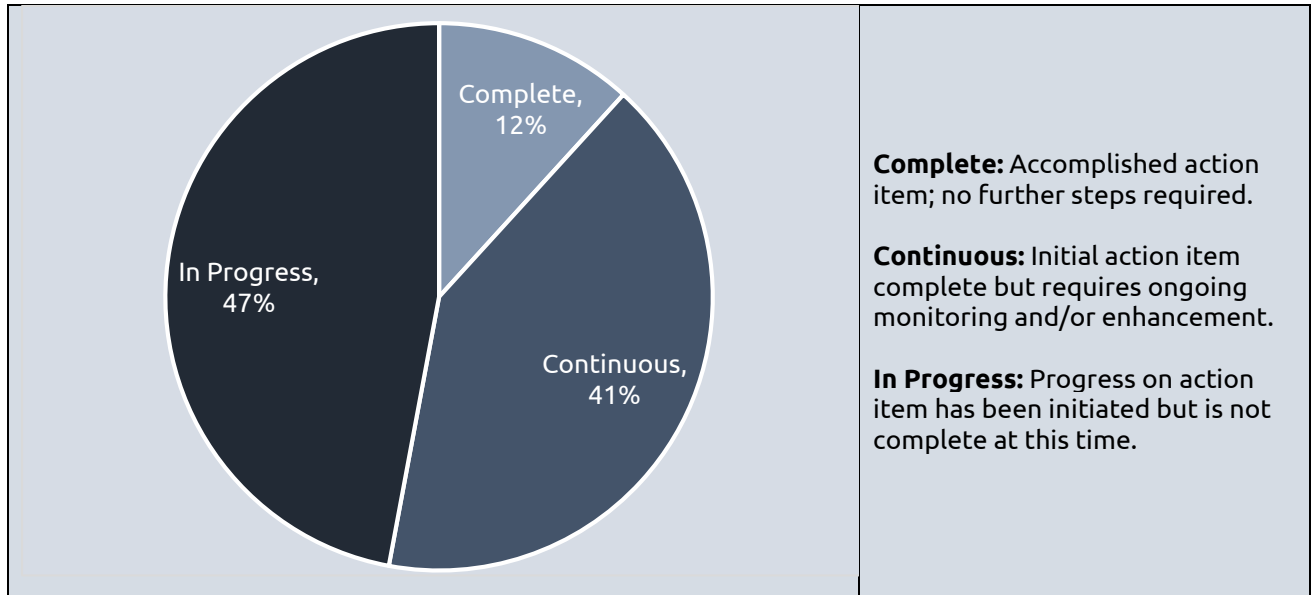
A copy of all [18-month reports](#) are available on the CIQE website for reference.

Upon reviewing the follow-up reports, the majority of action items are in progress or require continuous monitoring following the 18-month time frame. A selection of these items is outlined below.

- Continue to offer a selection of in-person and online courses post-pandemic while navigating online assessment challenges.
- Ongoing and formal communication with the recruitment and marketing teams to enhance enrolment.
- Improve exposure of early-year students to research faculty.
- Expand collaborative projects and connections with other Faculties.

The following chart outlines the overall process status of the 17 action items found in these reports.

Chart 3.1 Final Assessment Reports Action Items Status, 18-month follow-up



It falls to the Faculty to indicate when an action item has been completed and these are reported at the Academic Resource Committee (ARC) . After the 18-month review the Faculty Dean and the Provost discuss any outstanding or in progress items to be updated within the CIQE files.

4 Ministry of Colleges and Universities Approvals

While a program can be offered once the Quality Council has provided approval, receiving Ministry of Colleges and Universities (Ministry) approval allows for the students taking these programs to be eligible for OSAP funding and allows the institution to report domestic students towards our enrolment grant corridor.

The programs that were submitted for Ministry approval are provided in Table 4.1 below. Only one program, Undergraduate Diploma in Public Policy, was denied by the Ministry. The rationale was that the Ministry had, “concerns with respect to alignment with Ontario Tech’s focus to provide undergraduate and graduate programs that are technology enriched”. The Faculty is currently looking at options as to how to move forward with the program that was developed.

Table 4.1 Ministry of Colleges and Universities Submission and Approval Dates

Program	Submission Date	Approval Date
Doctor of Education (EdD)	Nov-21	May-22
Master of Financial Data Analytics	Dec-21	May-22
MASc/MEng Software Engineering	Feb-22	May-22
BEng Industrial Engineering	Mar-22	Sep-22
BEng Energy Engineering	Mar-22	Sep-22
Undergraduate Diploma Public Policy	Mar-22	Denied
Graduate Diploma in Police Leadership	Nov-21	Dec-22

Summary

As we worked through the pandemic there were instances where extensions were given in order to accommodate a more flexible and ever changing post-secondary landscape. As we begin to embark on the post pandemic era, timelines and process steps will fall under traditional timelines. The CIQE office will continue to monitor these timelines and communicate with the Provost and all Faculties to ensure that they are met.

The majority of quality assurance processes, aside from new programs, all saw increases over the past year. With many NOIs pending we are anticipating that the new program process will pick up in the upcoming year. It is also expected that, going into its third decade, the university will see the volume of activity related to quality assurance processes such as curricular additions and changes remain high in order to maintain quality and remain relevant to students. The volume of programs undergoing the cyclical review process has been substantial this cycle and will continue in this pattern due to timing of program initiation and as a result of expanding the review process from 1-year to 2-years.