

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
JULY 1 2013 – JUNE 30 2014



**ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES**  
COUNCIL on QUALITY ASSURANCE



## Message from the Chair of the Quality Council Sam Scully



Ontario's universities have long been leaders in quality assurance. As I have learned from reviewing other quality assurance bodies, Ontario's leading position, both national and international, is now exemplified in the 2010 *Quality Assurance Framework* (the QAF), on which the universities have agreed: in short, Ontario has the strongest processes of quality assurance in Canadian postsecondary education.

Many features contribute to the strength of the current work of the universities and the Quality Council. Here there is space to mention three features. First, that work is comprehensive: the Council reviews all new degree programs and graduate diplomas, while all existing programs are subject to thorough third-party review at least every eight years. Second, it is very rigorous: both the universities and the Council and its Committees employ detailed evaluation criteria, set out in the QAF, that probe the quality of every program. Finally, those criteria place great stress on the students and their learning: Ontario's universities are national leaders in their attention to learning outcomes and the needs of students.

For all their hard work, I must thank the Council members, in particular, Sue Horton, Maureen Lacroix and Patrick Oosthuizen, all founding members who left us in June; the members of the Appraisal and Audit Committees, whose diligence and insight are critical to the quality of the Council's work; and, last but not least, Donna Woolcott and her team. We deem it an honour to serve the public, the government and, above all, the students in ensuring that the programs meet today's highest standards.

## Message from the Executive Director Donna Woolcott

Assuring the value and quality of a university education offered by Ontario's publicly assisted universities requires the dedicated effort of many people. Foremost it requires a commitment from every university. The key contacts in quality assurance at each university play a central leadership role. Special thanks must be given to the Quality Council, led by Sam Scully, and to the Appraisal Committee, led by Jeff Berryman. Monthly meetings of both groups ensure timely decision-making. The teams who audit each university's quality assurance activities and the Audit Committee play crucial roles in assuring quality and promoting best practices. A final thanks goes to the staff in the Quality Assurance Secretariat for providing excellent support to the Council, its Committees, and the Universities.



## New Programs in Ontario Universities



Universities are active innovators as demonstrated by their new program development **Table 1**. Over the three years since the new Quality Council assumed its roles in program approval, there has been an emphasis on development of new master's and doctoral programs as well as new graduate diploma programs. The continued high level of activity responds in part to the provincial government's goal of graduate

education expansion and the funding attached to that goal. But undergraduate program development has been strong as well, reflecting the commitment to providing relevant programming to meet student and societal demand.

**Table 1: New Program Approval Activity 2011-2014**

Program Type:	Total Submitted in:			In Progress:			Total Approved:		
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Undergraduate	11	25	19	3	4	3	8	21	15
Master's	18	21	13	8	2	3	10	19	17
Doctoral	4	9	8	2	1	0	2	8	9
Graduate Diplomas	19	9	11	8	3	0	11	6	14
Graduate Field	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Collaborative <sup>1</sup> (Graduate)	5	4	3	2	0	1	3	4	2
<b>Total: New Programs</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>59</b>
Reports	23	26	12	26	2	4	23	24	11
<b>Total: All Appraisals</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>70</b>

<sup>1</sup> An intra-university graduate program that provides an additional multidisciplinary experience for students enrolled in and completing the degree requirements for one of a number of approved programs (QAF p.4).

New program development has fluctuated over the three years reported. The decline from 81 to 59 in total number of new programs developed in the two most recent years reflects the influence of many factors. Several universities have undertaken program prioritization exercises to assist them in identifying areas for growth and expansion and areas where there may be less focus in the future. At some institutions, new program development was put on hold pending the outcome of these larger planning processes. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) instituted a freeze in program funding approvals for several weeks in the spring of 2014 while it was engaged in the negotiation of strategic mandate agreements (SMA) with each university. Some universities put a hold on their own program developments during this period. The SMA process required each university to identify its areas of program strength and areas for priority development for the future.

**Table 1** also refers to the appraisal of 11 reports. In cases where the Quality Council approves a program to commence “with report,” or where reports are still being received from the previous Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS) review process, the Quality Council ensures that any quality assurance issues that were outstanding are being addressed appropriately by the university. More than half (55 percent) of these reports were accepted: any outstanding quality assurance issues had been addressed appropriately by the university. In the remaining cases, the Quality Council requested a further report to ensure the program’s quality.

In 2013-14, 15 of the proposals approved were for undergraduate programs, 17 for new master’s programs, and 9 for doctoral programs. A further 14 proposals for new Graduate Diploma programs were approved. Details about the approved programs found in **Table 2** indicate that many of the new programs being developed are interdisciplinary and applied in nature, reflecting contemporary student interests and a general response to emerging social, economic and professional developments.

By year-end, 17 of the 21 universities in Ontario had at least one new program approved by the Quality Council. **Table 2** lists the approved new programs by university. The Quality Council’s website features brief descriptions of these [approved programs](#).

*Many of the new programs are in applied or professional fields (e.g. social work; accounting; health sciences) or fit a specific career niche (e.g. game design; forensic psychology). Some reflect contemporary societal concerns (e.g. green energy; security, privacy and data protection).*

**Table 2: Program Approvals for 2013-14**

<b>University and Program</b>	<b>Degree</b>
<b>Brock University</b>	
• Computer Science	PhD
• Game Programming	BSc (Hons)
• Game Design <sup>2</sup>	BA (Hons)
• Master of Sustainability	MS and MS with Co-op
<b>Lakehead University</b>	
• Civil Engineering	MSc
• Master of Education – Education for Change (new field)	MEd
<b>Laurentian University</b>	
• Forensic Identification	BFI
<b>McMaster University</b>	
• Biomedical Discovery and Commercialization	BHSc and MBDC
• Professional Accountancy	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
<b>Nipissing University</b>	
• Anthropology	BA
• Social Work	BSW
<b>Queen’s University</b>	
• Business	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
• Biomedical and Molecular Sciences	MSc(AS)/MSc/PhD
• Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner Diploma	Graduate Diploma (Type 2)
• Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner Diploma	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
• Professional Inquiry	Graduate Diploma (Type 2)
• Professional Inquiry	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
• Risk Policy and Regulation	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
<b>Ryerson University</b>	
• Aerospace Design Management	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
• Dietetics	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)

<sup>2</sup> Offered in collaboration with Niagara College

<b>University and Program</b>	<b>Degree</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enterprise Information Security, Privacy and Data Protection</li> </ul>	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
<b>University of Guelph</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bioinformatics</li> </ul>	PhD
<b>University of Ontario Institute of Technology</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forensic Psychology</li> </ul>	MSc and PhD
<b>University of Ottawa</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Honours Bachelor of Social Sciences in Environmental Economics and Public Policy/ Baccalauréat ès sciences sociales spécialisé en économie et politiques publiques de l'environnement</li> </ul>	BSocSc
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major in World Cinemas/Majeure en cinémas du monde</li> </ul>	BA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management</li> </ul>	PhD
<b>University of Ottawa – Saint Paul University</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contemplative Theology and Spiritual Mentorship/ Diplôme d'études supérieures en théologie contemplative et mentorat spirituel</li> </ul>	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
<b>Trent University</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educational Studies</li> </ul>	MEd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Work</li> </ul>	BSW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water Sciences</li> </ul>	BSc
<b>University of Toronto</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering Education (collaborative program)</li> </ul>	Master's and Doctoral Levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human Development (collaborative program)</li> </ul>	Doctoral Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theological Studies<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	PhD
<b>University of Waterloo</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Energy</li> </ul>	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biomedical Engineering</li> </ul>	BASc
<b>University of Windsor</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Master's Program in Automotive Engineering<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>	MASc

<sup>3</sup> Offered conjointly with the Toronto School of Theology

<b>University and Program</b>	<b>Degree</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master of Applied Computing</li> </ul>	MAC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master of Laws</li> </ul>	LLM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master of Education – Second Language Acquisition, Culture and Society (New Field)</li> </ul>	MEd
<b>Western University</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honours Specialization in Epidemiology and Biostatistics</li> </ul>	BMSc
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Communication and Management</li> </ul>	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
<b>Wilfrid Laurier University</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accounting</li> </ul>	Graduate Diploma (Type 3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biological and Chemical Sciences</li> </ul>	PhD
<b>York University</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honours Minor in Japanese Studies</li> </ul>	BA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanical Engineering</li> </ul>	BEng
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Engineering</li> </ul>	BEng
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative Literature</li> </ul>	Graduate Diploma (Type 2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Literature</li> </ul>	Graduate Diploma (Type 2)

“The Quality Framework really helped our faculty to focus the curricula of several new innovative and multidisciplinary programs including the BA in Sport Media and the Masters in Digital Media. This gives the university and the departments confidence that the programs meet the needs of both our students and our community.”

**Christopher Evans, Vice-Provost, Academic  
Ryerson University**

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<sup>4</sup> Inter-institutional agreement between the University of Windsor and the Politecnico di Torino, Italy



## Timelines for Program Approval



Given the highly competitive nature of universities and the need to meet student, employer and other stakeholder demand for relevant new programs, timely decision-making is paramount. The Quality Council demonstrates strong commitment to both timely decision making and ensuring that its review and approval processes will result in new programs that meet the rigorous evaluation criteria set out in the QAF. The QAF calls for the Quality Council to meet a target of 45 days after submission of a new program proposal for an approval decision. As the data in the Appendix to this report show, the Quality Council met this target for all proposals received that required no further information from the proposing university. Even in cases where further information or clarification was required, this target was met in many cases.

## Changing, Improving and Closing University Programs

Universities are regularly changing and improving their existing programs. Many of them take the very difficult and challenging step of closing programs that no longer fit with their priorities or with the interests of students.

**Table 3** summarizes the program modifications made in 2012-13 compared to 2013-14, as reported in the Annual Reports on Major Modifications submitted by all 21 universities. The biggest difference between the two years is in the “other” category. The reason for this change was a clarification of instructions to universities for the 2013-14 year to encourage them to use the categories provided where appropriate, and to use “other” only when the change did not fit one of the categories. The most frequently reported changes are to add or delete specializations or concentrations to existing programs. It should be noted that 26 undergraduate and graduate programs were closed across Ontario’s universities in 2013-14 and 40 undergraduate and graduate programs in 2012-2013.



**Table 3: Reported Major Modifications by Program Level and Type for 2012-13 and 2013-14**

Type of Modification	Total 2012/13	Total 2013/14
<b>Undergraduate</b>		
Change course/program requirements	31	55
Add specialization, honours, option, concentration, stream	40	51
Closure of a program	28	17
Change program name	13	17
Closure of a specialization, honours, option, concentration, stream	16	16
Change program learning outcomes	5	8
Add new pathway for college students	12	7
Add co-op option	4	7
Other	58	6
Closure of a minor	2	5
Add new freestanding minor	9	0
Change faculty/other essential resources	3	0
<b>Undergraduate Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Graduate</b>		
Add new field, concentration, stream	18	25
Change admission requirements	6	15
Closure of a field, option	7	14
Change course/exam requirements	5	12
Closure of a program	12	9
Change field name	5	7
Add new unit to collaborative program	2	4
Change program learning outcomes	3	3
Add co-op, internship, practicum	2	3
Change program name	6	2
Change mode of delivery	2	2
Add Major Research Paper	2	1
Add new combined program	2	1
Add part-time/full-time/course based option	2	1
Other	32	1
Add international partner/locale to an existing program	3	0
<b>Graduate Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>289</b>

## Quality Assurance Audits

Consistent with “best practice” quality assurance in place internationally, the Quality Assurance Framework calls for the audit of each Ontario publicly assisted university every eight years to ensure that the university is doing what its policies commit to when it develops new programs, modifies existing programs, and reviews all programs with arm’s-length external reviewers at least every eight years.

Audit Reports for the University of Ottawa and Brock University, the first universities to be audited by the Quality Council, were approved by the Quality Council in the fall of 2013. The Summary Reports of Principal Findings of these Audits are available on the Quality Council website. Three universities had site visits for audit in 2013-14 including Western, Carleton and Queen’s University.



In each of the Audits completed or underway to date, great progress has been seen in the implementation of the new quality assurance policies. Each university has had its own unique challenges in these early years implementing the new QAF, but all demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring the maintenance of the highest standards of quality. The greatest challenge everywhere has been the shift to a strong focus on program learning outcomes. But it is also in this area that the audits are finding the universities rising to the challenge of clearly identifying learning outcomes and assessing the extent to which students are achieving them.

“The audit provided a valuable opportunity to reflect and engage in constructive conversations, both internally and with the audit team. This opportunity as well as the Auditors’ Report will enhance the quality assurance processes at Carleton in coming years. We will be guided by these conversations and the Report as we engage in a collaborative process with our various stakeholders to revise our IQAP over the coming year.”

**John Shepherd, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President  
(Academic), Carleton University  
Audit Process Overview**

## Audit Process Overview



## Outreach



Hart House (Photo by: Yi Zhao)

Seventy-five delegates representing 21 universities attended the first key contacts in quality assurance meeting organized by the Quality Council in April 2014. The purpose of the day was to provide a forum for the key contacts to meet and share experiences in implementing quality assurance. Highly interactive sessions were facilitated by Key Contacts and members of the Quality Council. Topics included creating a community of practice in quality assurance; engaging

faculty; defining and developing learning outcomes; supporting external reviewers' evaluation; and the role of data in cyclical program reviews. Plans are underway for a second meeting of the key contacts in quality assurance in 2015.

The Quality Council's collaboration with similar organizations led to successful Learning Outcomes conferences in 2012 and 2013. The Quality Council continued its participation on the Planning Committee and its sponsorship of the upcoming Third Learning Outcomes Symposium planned for the fall of 2014.

The new website for the Quality Council was launched in the fall of 2013. The Quality Council's [website](#) provides a window into the Quality Council's role, and features two key documents – the [Quality Assurance Framework](#) and the [Guide to the Quality Assurance Framework](#), a helpful resource for those responsible for quality assurance at Ontario universities.

The Quality Council developed new material to be added to the *Guide to the QAF* including best-practice advice for the Final Assessment Reports and Implementation Plans that are required for each completed cyclical program review in the universities.

The Executive Director of the Quality Council visited several universities and presented workshops on quality assurance or briefed new members in universities who are responsible for quality assurance. Quality assurance briefings and updates were made regularly by the Executive Director to the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV), MTCU, and OCGS throughout the year.

## On the Horizon

The Quality Council will continue its leadership and oversight of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Framework, which guides Ontario universities to provide their students with high quality programs and learning experiences. The rigorous review of all new program proposals and the requirement for expert review of all existing programs continue as the pillars of this framework. Students can expect to see transparent learning outcomes for all programs and to be assessed on their achievement of these learning outcomes. Quality assurance approval by the Quality Council is critical to MTCU when it makes funding approval decisions.

The Quality Council plans to continue many of the projects it took on as priorities last year, including raising awareness about the important role it plays in assuring the highest quality of programs leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees and graduate diplomas granted by Ontario's publicly assisted universities.

Outreach to the Universities and the broader community will continue. Building a strong community of practice among those involved in quality assurance work in the universities will continue. A second meeting of the key contacts in quality assurance will be planned. Finding and celebrating the examples of best practices in quality assurance will also continue.

The Quality Council welcomes suggestions and advice on how to enhance its performance and fulfil its mission, and looks forward to another productive year.



## Membership of the Quality Council in 2013-2014

### **Dr. Sam Scully, Chair**

Sam Scully, now a postsecondary education consultant, served eight-year terms as Provost and Vice-President Academic at both the University of Victoria and Dalhousie University. Since he retired in 2007, he has been engaged in quality assurance work, including policy development and conducting unit reviews, and in assisting Canadian universities with their searches for senior academic positions.

### **Dr. Ronald Bond, Out-of-Province Quality Assurance Expert**

Ronald Bond, now a consultant, is experienced in all levels of academic administration. He served as Provost from 1997 to 2006 at the University of Calgary, where he was named Provost Emeritus by the Board of Governors and has been invested as a member of the Order of the University of Calgary. Dr. Bond has completed two terms as Chair of the Campus Alberta Quality Council, is Vice-Chair of the Saskatchewan Higher Education Quality Assurance Board, and has worked on quality assurance in British Columbia and the Maritime provinces.

### **Dr. Sue Horton, Graduate Dean Representative**

Sue Horton is Associate Provost, Graduate Studies, at the University of Waterloo. She has served as Vice-President, Academic at Wilfrid Laurier University, Interim Dean at the University of Toronto, Scarborough, and Associate Dean in Arts and Science, University of Toronto. She has also served on one of the selection panels for the Premier's Discovery Awards, as Chair of the CIDA Tier 2 selection committee, as Vice-Chair of the Board of the International Food Policy Research Institute in Washington, D.C., and as Treasurer of the Board of the African Economic Research Consortium.

### **Mme. Maureen Lacroix, Citizen Member**

Maureen Lacroix's experience in Northern health care spans three decades in a variety of roles, ranging from frontline nursing to positions of senior leadership and administration. She was a member of the Laurentian University Board of Governors from 1996 to 2009, including serving as Chair of the Board of Governors from 2001 to 2003. She currently chairs the Northern Ontario Cancer Centre Foundation.

### **Dr. Moira McPherson, Undergraduate Dean Representative**

Moira McPherson is the Interim Provost and Vice-President (Academic) at Lakehead University; prior to this role she served as the Deputy Provost for three years. She led the development and implementation of the Academic Plan, the University's transition to the Institutional Quality Assurance process, efforts to increase student pathways and transfer, and most recently the development of the University's Strategic Mandate Agreement proposal. She has been invited to share her scholarly and professional expertise in applied kinematic and qualitative skill analyses with national and international organizations.



### **Dr. Nancy Walton, Academic Colleague Representative**

Nancy Walton is the Director of e-learning at Ryerson University and an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing. She has previous clinical experience as an advanced practice nurse in cardiac surgery, and administrative experience as Associate Director of the Collaborative Nursing Program at Ryerson University. Dr. Walton served as Chair of the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board from 2004-2013.

### **Dr. Patrick Oosthuizen, Academic Colleague Representative**

Patrick Oosthuizen, a professional engineer, was born and educated in South Africa. After teaching several years at the University of Cape Town, he joined the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering at Queen's University in 1968. An award-winning teacher, Dr. Oosthuizen teaches mainly in the areas of Compressible Fluid Flow, Aerospace Engineering, Heat Transfer and Energy Systems. He was also greatly involved with the CDIO initiative in engineering education in its earlier stages, in particular investigating the criteria that define a high-quality engineering program.

### **Dr. David Wilkinson, OCAV Representative**

David Wilkinson is Provost and Vice-President (Academic) at McMaster University. Prior to this role, he served as Dean of Engineering for four years. He is the author of over 200 scientific publications related to mechanical behaviour of both metals and ceramics. He was awarded the title of Distinguished University Professor at McMaster University in 2008, a title that can only be held by eight active faculty members in the university at a time. He was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 2009 and a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering in 2010.

### **Dr. Bruce Tucker, OCAV Representative**

Bruce Tucker is the Associate Vice-President, Academic Affairs at the University of Windsor. He led design and implementation of the University's quality assurance program, and he has been a member of the Quality Council since its inception. Dr. Tucker has published widely in both Canada and the U.S. on American intellectual and cultural history, the religious history of early New England, American urban history and Appalachian migration. He is currently working on a study of post 9/11 American political culture.

### **Dr. Donna Woolcott, Executive Director (ex-officio)**

Donna Woolcott spent 30 years as a faculty member in Ontario and Nova Scotia including seven years as Vice-President (Academic) at Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) in Halifax. Prior to joining MSVU, Dr. Woolcott was the Assistant Vice-President (Academic) at the University of Guelph, where she had oversight for the university's internal quality review processes. From 2004 to 2009, Dr. Woolcott served on the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, which oversees new program approvals and monitors quality assurance at the universities in the Maritimes.

## The Quality Council's Appraisal and Audit Committees

The Quality Council's Appraisal Committee reviews proposals for new undergraduate and graduate programs from Ontario's publicly assisted universities, and makes recommendations regarding their approval to the Quality Council.

### Members of the Appraisal Committee, 2013-2014

- Dr. Jeff Berryman (Chair), Faculty of Law, University of Windsor
- Dr. Kenneth Coley, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, McMaster University
- Dr. Sean Forrester, Faculty of Science, University of Ontario Institute of Technology
- Dr. Christine Gottardo, Department of Chemistry, Lakehead University
- Dr. André Lapierre, Department of Linguistics, University of Ottawa
- Dr. André Loiselle, Department of Film Studies, Carleton University
- Dr. Jan Polgar, School of Occupational Therapy, Western University
- Dr. Sandy Welsh (Vice-Chair), Faculty of Arts and Science, University of Toronto
- Dr. Donna Woolcott (*ex-officio*), Executive Director

The Quality Council's Audit Committee reviews audit reports prepared by the Quality Council Auditors and makes recommendations to the Quality Council. The audit report describes whether the university has, since its last review, acted in compliance with the provisions of its Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP).

### Members of the Audit Committee, 2013-2014

- Dr. Carolyn Andrew, Professor Emeritus, University of Ottawa
- Dr. John ApSimon, Professor Emeritus, Carleton University
- Dr. Paul Axelrod, Professor, York University
- Prof. Katherine Graham, Professor, Carleton University
- Dr. Roma Harris, Professor, Western University
- Dr. David Marshall, President Emeritus, Nipissing University
- Dr. Christine McKinnon, Professor, Trent University
- Dr. Charles Morrison, Professor, Wilfrid Laurier University
- Dr. John Pierce, Professor, Queen's University
- Dr. Marilyn Rose, Professor, Brock University
- Dr. Peter Sutherland, Professor, McMaster University

## The Quality Assurance Secretariat

The Quality Assurance Secretariat supports the ongoing business of the Quality Council and its Committees by providing timely information, advice and support. Among other responsibilities, the Secretariat prepares agendas and materials for all meetings and appraisals, takes minutes of meetings, and communicates decisions of the Appraisal Committee and the Quality Council to the appropriate institutions. The Secretariat also supports the Audit process, and provides general quality assurance and appraisal-related advice to Ontario universities.

### Members of the Secretariat, 2013-2014

- Shevanthi Dissanayake, Coordinator
- Barb Kelly, Consultant
- Cindy Robinson, Manager
- Donna Woolcott, Executive Director

## Mission

The Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance is the provincial body responsible for assuring the quality of all programs, leading to degrees and graduate diplomas that are granted by Ontario's publicly assisted universities, and the integrity of the universities' quality assurance processes. Through these practices, the Quality Council also assists institutions to improve and enhance their programs. In fulfilling its mission, the Quality Council operates in a fair, accountable and transparent manner with clear and openly accessible guidelines and decision-making processes, and through reasoned results and evidenced-based decisions.

*The Quality Council  
operates at  
arm's-length from  
Government and  
Ontario's universities.*

## Mandate

The roles and responsibilities of the Quality Council, while respecting the autonomy and diversity of the individual institutions, are the following:

- to guide Ontario's publicly assisted universities in the ongoing quality assurance of their academic programs
- to review and approve proposals for new graduate and undergraduate programs
- to ensure through regular audits that Ontario's publicly assisted universities comply with quality assurance guidelines, policies and regulations for graduate and undergraduate programs
- to communicate final decisions to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
- to review and revise, from time to time for future application, the Council of Ontario University's quality assurance protocols in light of its own experiences and developments in the field of quality assurance
- to liaise with other quality assurance agencies, both provincially and elsewhere
- to undergo regular independent review and audit at intervals of no longer than eight years

## Appendix: Timelines for Program Approval

The QAF indicates that a university will normally receive a decision on a proposed new program within 45 days of submission provided that the submission is complete and the Appraisal Committee does not require more information from the University in order to assess the proposal. When the Appraisal Committee requires additional information, the university should receive a decision within a further 30 days of the Committee receiving a satisfactory response to its request.

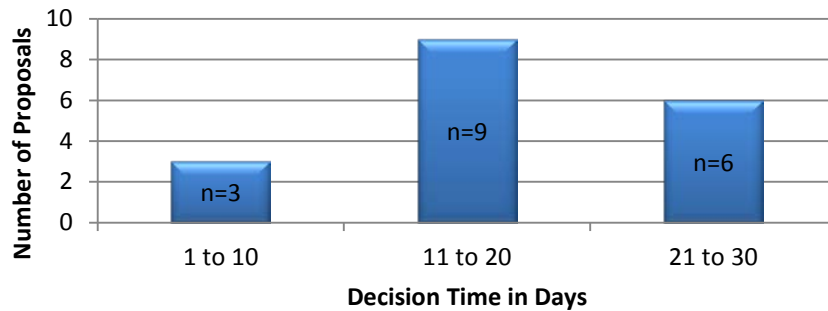
The data presented below demonstrate that the Quality Council met the target turnaround time of approval for all proposals submitted that did not require any clarification. In total, 28 of the 55 proposals received were approved within 45 days of submission to the Quality Council. All proposals that were complete (15) thus requiring no further information from the university were approved within 45 days and several (13) that involved some interaction with the university were also approved within this timeframe.

Of the appraisals completed, 15 (or 33 percent) did not require any further interaction with the university. Of these straightforward proposals, 47 percent of the Quality Council and Appraisal Committee decisions were made in less than 15 days. All of the decisions were communicated to the universities within 45 days of submission. The Quality Council's level of commitment to the turnaround times resulted in little impediment to the creation of new programs by Ontario universities.

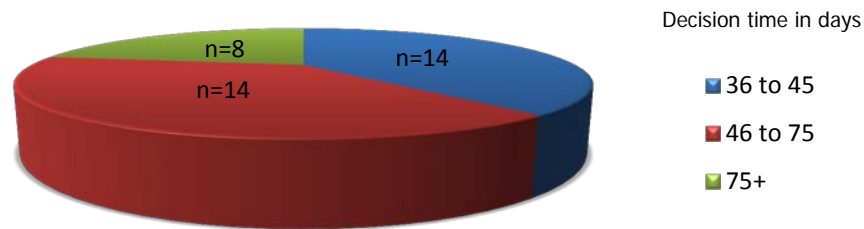
For the remaining completed submissions, there were 31 (or 67 percent) of the proposals that required additional information from and interaction with the submitting university. Of these, 42 percent were completed within 45 days and all but eight appraisals were completed in less than 75 days. The length of time it took the universities to submit the requested additional information was the biggest factor in these longer turnaround times.

The following charts include appraisals that were in progress at the year-end of 2012-13, but completed in 2013-14.

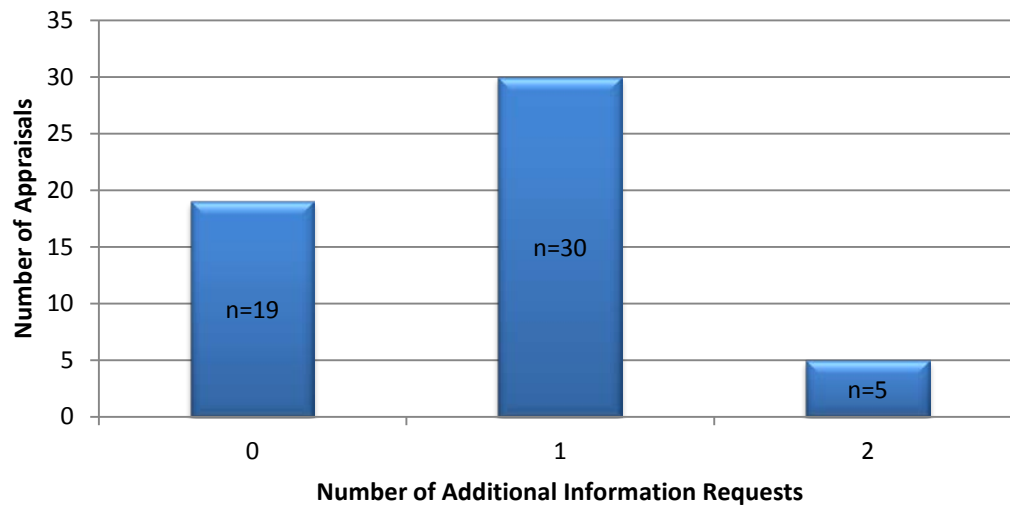
## Programs Approved With No Additional Information Requested



## Time Required for Program Approval when Additional Information Requested



## Additional Information Requests





**Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance**

180 Dundas Street West, Suite 1100  
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Z8  
Tel: 416-979-2165 Extension 235  
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