



ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
COUNCIL on QUALITY ASSURANCE

**SUMMARY OF AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE
SCOPE OF THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF
CANADA'S RESPONSE TO THE QUALITY
ASSURANCE AUDIT**

SEPTEMBER 2016

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SUMMARY STATEMENT

As per the Quality Assurance Framework Section 5.2.9, the Royal Military College of Canada submitted its One-Year Follow-Up Institutional Response on the Auditor's Report on June 6, 2016.

The Auditors reviewed this Response and drafted recommendations which were submitted to the Audit Committee for consideration. The Audit Committee, at its meeting of June 30, 2016, reviewed and approved the Auditors' recommendations on the Royal Military College of Canada's Response which were subsequently submitted to the Quality Council.

The Quality Council, at its meeting of July 28, 2016, unanimously approved the following motion:

That the Royal Military College of Canada's Institutional One-Year Follow-Up Response be Accepted.

The Quality Assurance Secretariat publishes the auditor's summary of the scope and adequacy of the institutional one-year follow-up response in accordance with Section 5.2.10 of the Quality Assurance Framework.

**AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE INSTITUTIONAL ONE-YEAR
FOLLOW-UP RESPONSE ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDIT OF
THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF CANADA**

SUMMARY

The Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council) undertook an Audit of Quality Assurance at the Royal Military College of Canada (RMCC) in 2014-15. As with all such audits, the purpose was to assess the extent to which RMCC complies with its own Institutional Quality Assurance Processes (outlined in the RMCC IQAP) and to affirm that the institution's IQAP is consistent with the Quality Assurance Framework that governs quality assurance activities at publicly assisted Ontario Universities.

The Quality Assurance Framework requires that each institution submit a One-Year Follow-Up Response to the Quality Council in which it describes the steps it has taken to address the Recommendations in the Audit Report. RMCC submitted its One-Year Follow-Up Response in June 2016. This is a Summary of the Auditors' Report on the Institutional One-Year Follow-Up Response to the Audit of Quality Assurance at RMCC.

The documentation received as part of the One-Year Follow-Up Response included a draft revised IQAP (v2.1) and explanations of how each of the Recommendations and Suggestions in the 2015 Audit Report had been addressed, with helpful cross-referencing to the revised IQAP. While RMCC was obliged to address each of the Recommendations in the Audit Report, the auditors were impressed by the serious consideration RMCC also gave to each of the Suggestions.

The first Recommendation in the Audit Report concerned the lack of documentation around the various stages of the cyclical program review process. The fourth Recommendation concerned RMCC's failure to meet its IQAP requirement that all documents produced during the cyclical program review process be made available in both official languages. Several Recommendations concerned internal inconsistencies or equivocations within the section and appendices of RMCC's IQAP governing cyclical program reviews, or places where the IQAP fell short of some of the requirements of the Quality Assurance Framework. As the auditors had audited only cyclical program reviews, the eleventh Recommendation required that RMCC review the sections and appendices of the IQAP governing new program proposals and major modifications and rectify shortcomings analogous to those the auditors had identified in the section and appendices of the IQAP governing cyclical program reviews. The tenth recommendation required that RMCC review its schedule of cyclical program reviews to ensure completeness.

RMCC's One-Year Follow-Up Response explains clearly how each of the issues identified in the Recommendations has been addressed in the draft revised IQAP. The auditors commend RMCC for embedding into the IQAP the requirement that copies of documentation be submitted to the Office of Quality Assurance at every appropriate stage. The draft revised IQAP clarifies which documents are to be made available in both official languages. It also eliminates the internal inconsistencies and equivocations that had been identified in the Recommendations, and it strengthens some of the requirements to match those of the Quality Assurance Framework, for cyclical program reviews as well as for new program proposals and major modifications. The auditors also thought that tables A4-1, A4-2, and A4-3 in Appendix 4 provided very clear and helpful guides to the various stages of the quality assurance processes.

The auditors are of the view that the draft revised IQAP, submitted as part of the One-Year Follow-Up Response and pending ratification by the Quality Council, will serve RMCC well in its commitment to continuous improvement of its academic programs. They commend RMCC on its One-Year Follow-Up Response.

RMCC IQAP MANUAL CHANGES MAY 2016

QUALITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: The various stages in the cyclical review process must be better documented. The Office of Quality Assurance must receive and archive copies of all the documents required at each stage of the process. The Office of Quality Assurance must make available to the auditors, at the time of the next audit, all documents required at each stage of the process for cyclical program reviews.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The RMC Office of Quality Assurance (OQA) has created document receipt checklists which will be reviewed for completeness on a weekly basis. As well, in each process where written documents result, copies are required to be forwarded to the OQA. This is cited in Sections 1.6, 2.2, 2.2 a), 2.2 b), 2.2 d), 2.4.2 f), 2.4.4, 2.6.2, 3.2.2, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.2.7, 3.2.8, 3.2.9, 3.2.13, 5, and Appendix 4 of the manual.

RECOMMENDATION 2: RMCC must clarify whether it is the responsibility of the Dean(s) or the Vice-Principal Academic to approve self-studies.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The line Dean is responsible for approving Self-Studies. This is cited in Sections 2.2 a), 2.3, and Appendix 4 of the manual.

RECOMMENDATION 3: RMCC must routinely survey the DND, professional associations, and employers for all its programs under review or modify its IQAP Appendix 7 Section 6. d. to remove this requirement.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** RMC has removed this requirement from its IQAP.

RECOMMENDATION 4: RMCC needs to review the requirement in its IQAP that all documents required by the cyclical program review process be made available in both official languages, and modify its IQAP and/or its practices accordingly.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** RMC has modified this to include only the Final Assessment Reports (FAR), Executive Summaries, the QC Main Audit Findings and the One-year Follow-up Report requiring translation in order to comply with the Official Languages Policy for materials published on the RMC website. This is cited in Section 2.6.2, Appendix 4, A.2.8 and A.2.10 of the manual.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The inconsistency between IQAP 2.4.2 and both IQAP 2.2 and Table A4-1 of Appendix 4 needs to be resolved so that it is clear who has the authority to select the external members of the ERC.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The authority to select external and internal members lies with the line Dean. This is cited in Section 2.2 b), 2.4.2 c), 3.2.4 d) and Appendix 4 of the manual.

RECOMMENDATION 6: RMCC needs to revise its IQAP to include details about the nomination and selection process of internal members of ERCs consistent with the requirements of QAF 4.2.4 b).

- **RMC RESPONSE:** RMC has implemented an ERC Verification Checklist that must be completed and returned to the OQA. As well, the IQAP Manual includes a new appendix dealing directly with choosing arm's length reviewers. This is cited in Sections 2.4.1, 3.2.4 and Appendix 5 of the manual.

RECOMMENDATION 7: RMCC needs to revise its IQAP to ensure that it meets the requirements of QAF 4.2.4 c) for briefing members of ERCs.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The IQAP Manual has been modified to reflect the requirements set out in QAF 4.2.4 c). This is cited in Section 2.4.3 and Appendix 4 of the manual.

RECOMMENDATION 8: RMCC needs to revise its IQAP to ensure that it meets the requirements of QAF 4.2.4 d) concerning the identification of materials that are to be sent to the members of the ERC and to specify who is responsible for sending them.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The appropriate Dean is responsible for sending materials to the ERC members. This is cited in Section 2.4.2 f) and Appendix 4 of the manual.

RECOMMENDATION 9: RMCC must either reinstate the Faculty Board Quality Assurance Committee or remove all reference to it in the IQAP (including in the Appendices and the Glossary).

- **RMC RESPONSE:** References to the Faculty Board Quality Assurance Committee have been removed from the IQAP Manual.

RECOMMENDATION 10: RMCC must review its list of programs offered against its cyclical program review schedule to ensure that every program is scheduled for review at least once every eight years.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The cyclical review schedule has been reviewed and will no longer be present in the IQAP Manual. It will be posted on the RMC website.

RECOMMENDATION 11: RMCC must review sections 3 and 4 of its IQAP and Appendices 5 and 9-10 to identify shortcomings analogous to those the auditors noted in section 2 of the IQAP and Appendices 5 and 6-8 and in the practices governed by them, and RMCC must amend the relevant sections of its IQAP and the related appendices and/or its practices.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The RMC IQAP Manual has been carefully reviewed and all changes analogous to Section 2 have been implemented in Sections 3, 4 and 5. In

addition, all templates have been removed from the manual and are now available on the RMC website.

QUALITY COUNCIL SUGGESTIONS

SUGGESTION 1: - The Vice-Principal Academic should ensure that program Heads are notified several months before the January 15 reminder that their program will be undergoing a review. This notice should be copied to the Librarian, the Office of the Registrar, and other offices that could provide support in the preparation of the self-study.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** In addition to the January reminder, an email will be sent in mid-October of the prior year, reminding Deans and Departments that programme(s) within their purview are scheduled for cyclical review in the following year. This is cited in Section 2.2 and Appendix 4, Table A4-1 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 2: RMCC should consider requiring that the responsible authority sign and date the self-study as confirmation that it has been approved.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The Dean is responsible for approving the Self-Study and is required to notify the OQA (in writing) that document has been approved. This is cited in Section 2.3 and Appendix 4 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 3: RMCC should conduct focus groups with current students, wherever possible, and should involve current students more directly in the drafting and review of the self-studies.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** This is cited in Section 2.3.1.4 b) of the manual.

SUGGESTION 4: RMCC should find ways to assist faculty more systematically in developing learning outcomes for their courses, articulating DLEs for their programs, and demonstrating how these are being met.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The OQA is currently drafting a supplement to the IQAP Manual that assists faculty in developing learning outcomes, articulating DLEs and demonstrating how these are being met. When complete, this will be placed on the RMC website.

SUGGESTION 5: RMCC should determine how it can best support the tasks related to data collection and analysis to meet IQAP requirements, calculate what human and financial resources are required to facilitate this, and determine what new resources from which sources would permit RMCC to meet best practice.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** RMC continues to improve the intra-section cooperation in the collection and analysis to meet IQAP requirements. This includes inviting appropriate sections to participate in information briefings.

SUGGESTION 6: RMCC should consider specifying more precisely how arm's length status of members of ERCs is determined.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The OQA has added a guide on choosing arm's length reviewers as well as verification checklists. This is cited in Sections 2.4.1, 3.2.4 g), Appendix 4 and Appendix 5 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 7: RMCC should ensure that, whenever possible, the schedule for site visits by ERCs have the ERC meeting first with the Vice-Principal Academic and then with the Dean, as per IQAP 2.4.3 b).

- **RMC RESPONSE:** ERC members will meet first with the VPA followed by meetings with the Dean and other stakeholders. This is cited in Section 2.4.3 and Appendix 4 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 8: Consistent with privacy legislation, RMCC should find ways of ensuring that programs meet the requirement of its IQAP to provide samples of students' written work to ERCs.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** This is cited in Section 2.3.1, 5) c.i.c of the manual

SUGGESTION 9: RMCC should explore the feasibility of having the ERC reports submitted electronically.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** This is cited in Section 2.4.4 and Appendix 4 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 10: RMCC should consider amending its IQAP to require that the Dean(s) review the ERC reports before forwarding them to program Heads.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** This is cited in Section 2.4.4 and Appendix 4 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 11: RMCC should consider amending its IQAP to – in the event that an ERC report does not address the components of the review as required by IQAP 2.4.5 and Appendix 8 – permit a Dean to return the ERC report to be completed or to commission another one.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** This is cited in Section 2.4.4 and Appendix 4 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 12: RMCC should review the requirement in its IQAP that those responsible for the self-study provide a response to the ERC report separate from the response the program Head is to provide. RMCC also should specify to whom such a response is to be provided.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** This is cited in Section 2.5 of the manual, as a collaborative effort.

SUGGESTION 13: RMCC should review its IQAP to determine whether the program Head is the appropriate authority to draft a response to the ERC report and the program's response to it that meets the requirements of QAF 4.2.4 g).

- **RMC RESPONSE:** This is a collaborative effort between the Programme Head, faculty, technical staff and students (when available) and is cited in Section 2.5 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 14: RMCC should review its IQAP to make it clear that program Heads are not responsible for drafting Implementation Plans.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** While the Department Head may recommend plans based on the ERC Report, it is the responsibility of the Dean to prepare the FAR, specifically the implementation plan. This is cited in Section 2.5 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 15: RMCC should review the requirement that the Dean draft a brief report to the Vice-Principal Academic and draft the FAR.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** Though the Dean is ultimately responsible for drafting the FAR and Executive Summary, it is truly a synthesis of the external evaluation, internal responses and assessments, from which the Dean sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that are selected for implementation. This is cited in Section 2.6 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 16: RMCC should ensure that the Implementation Plans produced by the Deans are plans and not reports.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** RMC will ensure that the implementation plans are monitored and include yearly monitoring and reporting. This is cited in Section 2.7 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 17: RMCC should include in the Glossary of its IQAP a definition of Implementation Plan that makes clear its intended purpose.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** A definition of Implementation Plan has been included and can be found in Appendix 1 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 18: RMCC should review the template for the ERC report in Appendix 8 and decide whether it wishes to include a requirement that the ERC comment on programs in the context of provincial, national or professional standards, as appropriate.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** This is cited in Section 3 of the External Review Committee's Report, which will be posted on the RMC website.

SUGGESTION 19: RMCC might consider removing the templates (Appendices 6-10) from its IQAP and providing links within the IQAP to the templates.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** All templates will be posted on the RMC website and removed from the manual.

SUGGESTION 20: RMCC might consider removing the cyclical program review schedule from its IQAP and replacing it with a link to the schedule.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The cyclical programme review schedule will be posted on the RMC website and removed from the manual.

SUGGESTION 21: RMCC might consider including the date of the most recent cyclical program review in its cyclical program review schedule.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The date of the most recent cyclical programme review will be included in the cyclical programme review schedule and posted on the RMC website.

SUGGESTION 22: RMCC should review and revise the explanations of several of the terms provided in the Glossary at Appendix 3.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** The Glossary (Appendix 1) has been reviewed and revised.

SUGGESTION 23: RMCC should consider developing and having approved a policy governing program closures.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** RMC has included a policy governing programme closures. This is cited in Section 5 of the manual.

SUGGESTION 24: RMCC should ascertain the status of the ‘Recent Proposals’ (dated January 2009) for changes to the Terms of Reference of the Syllabus Committee and the Graduate Studies & Research Committee and should modify Appendices 11 and 12 accordingly.

- **RMC RESPONSE:** Appendices 11 and 12 have been removed from the IQAP Manual.



Royal Military College of Canada

Royal Military College of Canada Institutional Quality Assurance Process Manual

2016

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF CANADA INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS MANUAL

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**ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF CANADA
INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY
ASSURANCE PROCESS MANUAL (RMC IQAP)**

Reference A: *Quality Assurance Framework*, Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance, 22 April 2010

1. INTRODUCTION

A glossary of terms used in this manual is found in Appendix 1, and a list of acronyms in Appendix 2.

1.1 Quality Assurance and Ontario Universities

The governing body that oversees and approves the quality of all academic programmes across the province is the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance, hereafter referred to as the OUCQA or the Quality Council (QC). The Quality Council requires that each university conduct systematic reviews of both new and existing programmes in accordance with OUCQA specifications. This includes external peer reviews as an integral part of the process at every level, in most cases.

The Royal Military College of Canada (RMC) has developed a protocol for reviews of its academic programmes to meet both the OUCQA requirements as well as its own internal standards for academic accountability: The RMC Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) that is defined in this manual. It specifies the processes that RMC uses to conform to these province-wide standards, while reflecting the unique character, mandate and priorities of RMC as the University of the Canadian Armed Forces.

1.2 University Degree Level Expectations

[See Appendix 3: RMC Undergraduate and Graduate Degree Level Expectations](#)

The OUCQA quality assurance process consists of two parts: 1) a clear articulation of specific expectations for graduates of a particular academic programme; and 2) systematic processes to identify and assess how the various components of the programme instil those capabilities in its graduates.

The Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) has identified generic benchmarks of student performance at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in the Framework document [Reference A]. These University Undergraduate and Graduate Degree Level Expectations (UUDLEs and GDLEs) outline specific expected skill attainments in individual academic programmes, as well as required knowledge in broader, more general subjects. Each university is expected to articulate its own undergraduate and graduate level expectations so as to meet these minimum OUCQA requirements, as well as to reflect the particular mandate, vision and expertise of the individual institution. RMC has therefore

added to these OUCQA expectations to accommodate the priorities and strengths specific to the RMC unique learning environment and its position as Canada's military university. Appendix 3 lists the current approved RMC degree level expectations. In addition, each department must develop its own DLEs, specific to its programme(s), to be housed outside of the RMC IQAP and updated as part of each cyclical review.

1.3 RMC Mission Statement

The mission of the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC) is to produce officers with the mental, physical and linguistic capabilities and the ethical foundation required to lead with distinction in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). To accomplish this mission, RMC will deliver undergraduate academic programmes, together with a range of complementary programmes. These programmes will be offered in both official languages. As Canada's military university, RMC will also provide undergraduate and post-graduate programmes, and professional development education, both on campus and at a distance, to meet the needs of other members of the CAF and DND. As a national institution, RMC will also endeavour to share its knowledge with civilians with interest in defence issues. RMC will encourage research appropriate to a modern university and seek out research opportunities that support the profession of arms.

Achieving the Mission

The core residential undergraduate programmes are focused on Officer Cadets of the Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP), the Reserve Entry Training Plan (RETP) or the University Training Plan - Non-Commissioned Members (UTPNCM). These demanding, multi-faceted programmes are aimed directly at students who will serve in the Canadian Armed Forces as officers immediately upon graduation. Their university programmes are undertaken in parallel with the extensive leadership, athletics and bilingualism training that are key components of their training as future officers.

However, there are also many Canadian Armed Forces members who undertake the same RMC academic programmes via distance education in remote locations within Canada and throughout the world. Others are members of the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves, often distance education students, but sometimes completing the programmes as full time students at the main campus. All these students complete the academic programmes but not the other three training components added to the ROTP, RETP and UTPNCM programmes.

With respect to the undergraduate programmes at RMC, this IQAP concerns only the academic component of those programmes. These programmes reflect the unique mission of RMC as the Canadian military university with a national vision of educating leaders for the country. Graduates receive an education of atypical breadth which is oriented towards those issues fundamental to the modern profession of arms.

To accomplish this special mission, the combination of arts and sciences common to all liberal undergraduate education in Canada is augmented and refocused to provide graduates with a body of knowledge appropriate for military service in a democracy. All programmes, including science and engineering, require a study of international and Canadian military history, military theory and strategy, civics, Canadian government and military law. Furthermore, all, including humanities programmes, include an exposure to modern science and emerging technology and their impact on all aspects of military affairs. Finally, all programmes include the contemporary theory and practice of leadership, particularly its ethical component.

In post-graduate programmes, there are no standard course requirements specifically aimed at the unique RMC mission. Rather, that mission is expressed, in many programmes, either directly or indirectly through the research undertaken by students and their faculty supervisors. In many cases, this research is oriented towards military topics and the military applications of traditional academic disciplines. Many faculty members form partnerships with the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, which inherently focus the graduate students towards the broader support of the country's military activities and often permit close integration between the scholarly activities of the students and the specific needs and interests of the Forces. Faculty and post-graduate student research that is less directly applicable to the CAF supports the RMC mission by keeping the faculty active in their respective disciplines, to the benefit of the undergraduate and graduate programmes that are central to that mission.

In New Programme Proposals and in Self-Study Reports for Cyclical Reviews, the RMC mission statement above is to be supplemented with statements about the Faculty and Programme mission.

1.4 Responsibility for Academic Quality

[See Appendix 4: Table of Action Items for Faculty and Staff](#)

RMC bears the responsibility for ensuring the quality of all of its programmes of study. This includes the content and modes of delivery of those programmes as well as all academic and student services that affect their quality. The responsibility for quality assurance extends to all new and continuing undergraduate and graduate degree and diploma programmes, whether offered in full, in part, or conjointly by any institutions affiliated with RMC.

The RMC IQAP has been created to meet the requirements of the Quality Council. It provides the framework and templates to assist faculties as they conduct comprehensive, constructive, and meaningful reviews of their existing programmes, and of proposals for new programmes or changes to approved programmes. This manual specifies the processes to be used for all types of regular reviews and proposals for changes. Peer review is an integral part of

many of the procedures, both within RMC and, in certain important cases, externally as well.

Some of the processes are completed through to the final approval stage entirely within the RMC, following the IQAP processes that themselves have been reviewed and approved by the Quality Council. Others include Quality Council approval as the final step before RMC can implement the proposal.

There are three primary categories for the various processes and these are discussed in the following order:

- 1) the cyclical review of an existing programme undergoing no major changes;
- 2) the development of a new programme; and
- 3) revisions to an approved existing programme.

The processes to be followed and the responsibilities of the various personnel involved at RMC for each of these categories are described below. The specific action required of the participants is tabulated in Appendix 4.

With the founding of the QC in 2010 and the subsequent establishment of official, province-wide approval processes for programme reviews, all of these reviews are overseen by the QC. The QC is also responsible for approving new programmes. Previous processes, such as the review of graduate programmes under the auspices of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS), or the Undergraduate Programme Review Audit Committee (UPRAC), are now replaced entirely by the new QC processes.

Professional accreditation programmes, such as those carried out under the authority of the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB), will continue. However, institutions are free to add to those existing accreditation processes, where appropriate, in order to allow the professional accreditation process already in place to meet all the requirements of the QC at the same time. RMC has chosen to supplement the CEAB accreditation process with the additional requirements of its IQAP review in order to avoid having to carry out separate IQAP and CEAB processes.

In order to meet the institutional audits undertaken by the QC on all these reviews, the RMC IQAP has been developed using the rubric laid out in the QC's Framework document [Reference A]. Beginning in 2011, all RMC academic programmes began using the IQAP laid out in this manual as the framework for their reviews, adding specific details and objectives as they deem appropriate for their disciplines. At a minimum, all reviews must provide the information outlined in this document relevant to the type of review being conducted.

1.5 RMC Authority Responsible

- a) The authority responsible for the RMC IQAP is the Senate.
- b) The Vice Principal (Academic) is the authoritative contact between RMC and the QC in all matters related to the RMC IQAP.
- c) The RMC Office of Quality Assurance (QA) will provide guidance and support to Faculties carrying out reviews. Though the chair or head of department responsible for the programme (referred to here as the Programme Head) under review takes the primary responsibility in collecting, aggregating and distributing the raw data required, the QA may provide or compile certain quantitative data, standard surveys and templates. Analysis of QA reports and data is the responsibility of the Programme Head.
- d) The QA Office is responsible for the systematic maintenance of this IQAP manual and for seeking approval from the QC for any revisions to it. QA will also archive all the documents produced for reviews in accordance with this IQAP manual, as required by the QC for audit purposes and annual reporting. See Annex A of this document for a full description of the audit process undertaken by the QC to ensure that Cyclical Reviews, New Programme Proposals and Programme Change Proposals follow the procedures outlined in the RMC IQAP manual, as approved by the QC.

1.6 Policy on Accessibility of Quality Assurance Documents

The RMC quality assurance processes are open and transparent, comprising input from most members the RMC community, as well as from external reviewers. It is the policy of RMC that all documents produced as part of the IQAP are accessible to all students and staff of the university, with the sole exception of portions that are directly related to confidential personnel issues. The latter will be identified by the responsible Faculty Deans, and will be annotated and dealt with according to RMC and DND document security policies.

As part of the processes described here, QA will receive copies of all documents created under this IQAP and will archive these documents as required for audit purposes by the QC. Further, QA will distribute 'Action and Document Reception Checklists' to all programmes undertaking all processes outlined in this manual. Weekly verifications between QA and programmes undergoing cyclical review will be maintained throughout the duration of each process. Programme chairs will be responsible to respond to requests for information or documents in a timely manner.

2. CYCLICAL REVIEW OF EXISTING PROGRAMMES

2.1 Initiation of the Cyclical Review Process

[See Appendix 4: Table of Action Items for Faculty and Staff](#)

All existing academic programmes at RMC are subject to review on a cyclical basis. The cyclical review of a programme is initiated by the Vice-Principal (Academic) based on an established university-wide schedule. Programmes tied to cyclical professional accreditation reviews will follow the schedule set by the relevant accreditation board—for example, engineering programmes under review will follow the CEAB schedule (6-year cycle) and perform the reviews concurrently. In the interest of streamlining collaborative processes, the review of RMC and Queen’s University’s joint programme in Geoengineering will follow the Queen’s Cyclical Review schedule and IQAP. For additional comments on the review of joint programmes, see the end of this section, 2.8. All other RMC programmes will follow an 8-year schedule for cyclical review.

2.2 Schedule of Cyclical Reviews and Overview of their Components

Programmes to be reviewed in a given calendar year will be reminded by the VP Academic on October 15 with a QA-led presentation in mid-November of the year prior to the year of review and again by January 15 of the year in which the review takes place. Follow-up meetings will take place as required. Affected Programme Heads, faculty, support staff as well as the Librarian and Registrar will participate in this briefing. The External Review Committee (ERC) Site Visit will normally occur in October or November of the same year. Before beginning the review of a programme, all distinct modalities (methods of delivery: classroom, online), locations (multi-site, multi-institution), languages of delivery (English, French), and levels of the programme (general, major, honours, master’s, doctorate) must be identified in order to ensure the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the review. It is likely that RMC will combine reviews of programmes that offer degrees at multiple levels where possible, and, in these cases, both the Faculty Dean and the Dean of Graduate Studies will oversee the review process. The cyclical review of different levels of the programme may use elements of a common self-study, be done concurrently and by the same review team if appropriate. The Final Assessment Report and the Executive Summary will be available in both official languages. A copy of all of the documents circulated internally and externally (i.e., between the programme under review and the Dean, ERC, Quality Council, etc.) for each step of the process will be forwarded at the time of circulation to QA.

Where programmes are subject to cyclical accreditation reviews, such as those of the CEAB, the IQAP and accreditation cyclical reviews will be conducted concurrently. Programmes conducting concurrent accreditation and IQAP cyclical must be sure to meet all requirements of both reviews. The outcome of these combined cyclical reviews may take the form of a single report following

the accreditation review template with supplemental material where needed to conform to the additional requirements of this IQAP.

The Head of the programme under review will submit a short brief to the VP Academic through the appropriate Dean(s), listing all modalities, locations, languages of delivery and levels of the programme under review. After the VP Academic approves this brief, the review process can begin. The cyclical review of an existing programme has four principal components:

- a) **Self-Study:** The Self-Study is an internal evaluation and report written by the Programme Head and programme faculty, and submitted to the appropriate Dean(s) for review and approval and, ultimately, to the External Review Committee (ERC). Once approved by the appropriate Dean(s), a copy of the Self-Study will be forwarded to QA. The Dean will also notify QA, in writing, that the Self-Study has been approved. If desired, programmes undergoing a combined professional accreditation and IQAP cyclical review may build their Self-Study from the accreditation review template and provide supplementary material to satisfy the additional requirements of this IQAP.
- b) **External Evaluation:** The External Evaluation consists of a review of the Self-Study, a Site Visit, and culminates with an ERC report containing recommendations to improve programme quality. The ERC is composed of one (for undergraduate programmes) or two (for graduate programmes) members external to RMC and one member internal to RMC but external to the programme under review. In the case of bilingual programmes, at least one member of the ERC should be bilingual in order to capture a more accurate snapshot of the programme under review. ERC members are nominated by the Department Head of the programme under review and approved by their respective line Dean(s) except in the case of concurrent Cyclical Reviews and CEAB accreditation for engineering programmes, where external reviewers are chosen by the CEAB. The ERC Report is to be received by the appropriate Dean(s) of the programme under review, copied, and forwarded to both the programme under review and to QA.
- c) **Programme Response and Implementation Plans:** The programme response and implementation plan is a reply to the ERC assessment report. It includes plans to implement recommendations for programme quality improvement. This is a response drafted by the Head and selected programme faculty, and is submitted to the appropriate Dean(s).
- d) **Final Assessment Report and Executive Summary:** These documents report the principal findings of the review and the implementation of their recommendations. The Final Assessment Report (FAR), drafted by the appropriate Dean(s), submitted to the VP Academic and forwarded to QA,

must be submitted to the Quality Council following RMC Senate approval, and must include an Executive Summary, exclusive of confidential information, to be posted on the RMC website.

Each of these components and its related requirements is described further below.

2.3 Self-Study

The Self-Study process consists of two elements: the gathering of information and the writing of the Self-Study report. The QC emphasizes that the opinions of faculty, staff, students and, where relevant, industry representatives, should be intrinsic to the Self-Study; and the Self-Study report must document both how these views were obtained and how they will be taken into account.

RMC meets these requirements by administering confidential surveys to full-time and sessional faculty, current students and recent graduates, by arranging for discussions with focus groups of students, faculty and other stakeholders as appropriate, and by inviting faculty to provide written input. The Chief Librarian will prepare a report on library resources for each programme under review. The Programme Head will provide comments on the Library and also on all other resources that can or may contribute to the running of the programme, such as the Division of Graduate Studies and Research, the Division of Continuing Studies, College Information Services, the Writing Centre, the Language Centre, Physical Plant, the Comptroller, the Registrar and the Bookstore. Upon completion, the Self-Study will be submitted to the appropriate Dean for approval. Once approved, the Dean will notify QA (in writing) that the Self-Study has been approved for distribution to the ERC.

2.3.1 Structure of Self-Study Report

[See Appendix 3: RMC Degree Level Expectations](#)

The Self-Study should be reflective and searching, and should be arranged to move from the global to the specific. Programmes undergoing a combined accreditation and IQAP cyclical reviews may build their Self-Study from the accreditation review template and provide supplementary material to satisfy the additional requirements of this IQAP. The following provides an explanation.

1) Scope of the Review

- a. Programmes to be reviewed.
- b. Faculty and staff delivering the programme.
- c. Student numbers (full and part-time), including rates of completion since the last cyclical review or the past 3 years if the programme is undertaking its initial programme review.

- 2) **Articulation of RMC Mission and place of Programme within that Mission**
 - a. A general preamble on the RMC Mission. A mission statement to be supplemented as necessary is found in Section 1.3. It explains the special role of RMC as a federal and military institution and discusses how the expectations which go along with this status affect the curriculum and general approach to studies here.
 - b. A review of the RMC and programme-specific Degree Level Expectations for the programme, and a map of how the programme requirements fulfill these expectations (for both English and French streams and for general, major and Honours, as applicable, in the case of undergraduate programmes). Appendix 3 lists the current approved RMC degree level expectations. In addition, each department must develop its own DLEs, specific to its programme(s), to be housed outside of the RMC IQAP.
 - c. Articulation of how individual courses relate to objectives of programme (including course outlines).
- 3) **Programme-related Data**
 - a. Measures of performance, including comparison to applicable provincial, national, and professional standards.
 - b. State of the Discipline: articulate how the programme meets/reflects the current standard in the discipline.
- 4) **Methodology for Participation**
 - a. The Self-Study will be reviewed by the appropriate Dean(s) to ensure that it follows the criteria set out in the IQAP manual. QA will provide certain quantitative data, support and guidance to departments. Analysis of QA reports and data is the responsibility of the Programme Head.
 - b. Comments on how data were obtained, and their integrity: explicitly note the sources of data and factors relating to collection. The study must explain the level and degree of participation of programme faculty, staff, and students in the Self-Study, and how their views have been obtained and taken into account. Where possible and applicable, the study will include comments solicited from current students and graduates of the programme. Sample templates for these surveys are available from QA.

- c. Evidence that all faculty members have been provided the opportunity to participate in the self-appraisal process and to comment on the Self-Study report. Part-time faculty who regularly teach in the programme are also to be given this opportunity. If there are differing views among the faculty these should be noted.

5) Review Criteria and Quality Indicators

- a. Admission requirements to the programme and a statement of how these are consistent with the established learning outcomes for completion of the programme.
- b. Curriculum:
 - i. Evidence that the objectives of the programme are calibrated to compare to other institutional standards.
 - ii. Evidence of innovation or creativity in the content and delivery of the programme relative to other programmes.
 - iii. Evidence that modes of delivery are appropriate to meet programme's identified outcomes.
- c. Quality Indicators
 - i. Sub-report of in-programme performance of students since the last cyclical review (or past three years if this is the initial programme review), produced by the Programme Head (with the support of QA if necessary). To be included:
 - a. Student pass/fail rates in individual undergraduate courses.
 - b. Analysis of student grade distributions and averages.
 - c. In accordance with the requirements of Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation, a random sampling of undergraduate student performance, especially in the graduating year, including, for example, examination scripts, research reports, theses and publications.
 - d. A survey of current undergraduate students highlighting opinions on strengths and weaknesses of the programme and suggestions for improvement. Templates for these surveys are available from QA, and programmes are free to add to, but not delete, questions on the survey. Once the Programme Head has gathered

contact information for those being surveyed, the surveys will be administered online by QA. QA will then relay the results of the surveys to the Programme Head for analysis.

- e. A survey of recent graduates of the programme highlighting opinions on strengths and weaknesses of the programme and suggestions for improvement. Templates for these surveys are available from QA, and programmes are free to add to, but not delete, questions on the survey. Once the Programme Head has gathered contact information for those being surveyed, the surveys will be administered online by QA. QA will then relay the results of the surveys to the Programme Head for analysis.
- ii. Sub-report on state of faculty produced by the Programme Head. To be included:
 - a. Statistics on individual teaching loads for full-time and part-time faculty for a 5-year summary.
 - b. A summary of all its full-time as well as part-time faculty members, including their qualifications, areas of specialization, current CVs, and current research. All CVs must provide completely up-to-date information on teaching activities. The current format template for these CVs is available from QA.
 - c. Comments on the impact of budget changes, retirements, etc. and plans to fill future positions.
 - d. Listing of awards, recognition, internal and external honours for faculty; research groups, professional associations, etc.
- d. Quality Enhancement
 - i. Initiatives taken to enhance the quality of the programme and the associated teaching and learning environment.
- e. Additional graduate programme criteria
 - i. Evidence that students' time-to-completion is both monitored and managed in relation to the programme's defined length and programme requirements.
 - ii. Quality and availability of graduate supervision.

- iii. Definition and application of indicators that provide evidence of faculty, student and programme quality, for example:
 - a. Faculty: funding, honours and awards, and commitment to student mentoring.
 - b. Students: grade-level for admission, scholarly output, success rates in provincial and national scholarships, competitions, awards and commitment to professional and transferable skill.
 - c. Programme: evidence of a programme structure and faculty research that will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience.
 - d. Sufficient graduate level courses that students will be able to meet at least two-thirds of their course requirements through courses at this level.
 - f. Academic services and resources that directly contribute to the academic quality of the programme under review:
 - i. Effective use of existing human, physical and financial resources to deliver both on-site and distance programmes.
 - ii. External funding sources.
 - iii. Infrastructure.
- 6) **Concerns or Recommendations Noted in Previous Reviews**
 - a. This should have a particular focus on previous problem areas and steps taken to remedy them.
- 7) **Areas Identified Requiring Improvement**
 - a. New areas identified through the conduct of the Self-Study requiring improvement.
- 8) **Areas that hold Promise for Enhancement**
- 9) **Future Plans to Continue to Develop the Programme**
- 10) **Impact of Faculty, Staff, and Student Participation in the Self-Study**

2.4 External Evaluation

An external evaluation of the programme is a necessary element of the cyclical review process. The external evaluation includes a Site Visit conducted by the External Review Committee (ERC). The Self-Study Report and other relevant documents including samples of students' work must be made available to all

members of the ERC at least 6 weeks prior to their visit. The ERC produces its report after having read the Self-Study and completed the Site Visit. During the Review process, the office of the Faculty Dean will be the liaison between the programme and the ERC while documents are in play; all documentation related to the Self-Study, the ERC Report, and the Programme Response is to be handled exclusively by the Dean's Office to obviate direct communication between the Programme Head and the ERC. The Site Visit is also arranged through the office of the Faculty Dean, and should normally occur in October or November; the schedule for the Site Visit should be prepared at least a month in advance to allow for any necessary changes.

2.4.1 The External Review Committee (ERC)

The ERC is composed of either two or three members: one external reviewer for an undergraduate programme or two external reviewers for a graduate programme/concurrent review of an undergraduate and graduate programme, and one further reviewer who is from within RMC but external to the discipline or interdisciplinary group being reviewed. In the case of programmes delivered in both English and French, at least one member of the ERC should be bilingual. The ERC members will be active and respected in their fields—usually they will be associate or full professors with programme management experience—and they will be at arm's length from the programme under review (i.e., not collaborators, supervisors, supervisees, relatives, etc.). Appendix 5 provides detailed examples of what do and do not violate the arm's length requirement. Deans will complete an ERC Verification Checklist to be returned to QA. Care will be taken by the appropriate Dean(s) to vet each reviewer for any possible conflict of interest. Additional ERC members from industry or professions may be assigned in certain fields as appropriate (i.e., especially in professional programmes).

2.4.2 Selection of the ERC

- a) Three to five names of recommended external reviewers will be put forward, ranked in order of preference, if applicable, and submitted to the appropriate Dean(s) by the Programme Head under review. The Head will also propose 2-3 names of recommended internal reviewers to the appropriate Dean.
- b) At the same time, the Head will identify several two-day blocks suitable for the Site Visit.
- c) The Dean(s) will make final decisions on the external and internal reviewers, while ensuring that, for the internal reviewer, his/her teaching workload and other duties will not be adversely affected.
- d) The Dean(s) will send written invitations to the proposed reviewers inviting (both internal and external) them to serve and including the possible

dates for the Site Visit. Based on responses from the reviewers, the date of the Site Visit will be finalized.

e) The Dean's office will arrange all travel and accommodations for members of the ERC and begin the process of arranging payment of honoraria for the ERC members. All payments associated with the external visitor will be paid from the Dean's budget.

f) Once the membership of the ERC is confirmed, the Programme Head will submit the Self-Study Report, including additional documentation such as examples of student work, etc., to the Faculty Dean, who will review and approve it before sending it (electronically) to each member of the ERC. The Dean will also forward a copy of this material to QA at this time specifically noting that the Self-Study has been approved. The ERC is to receive this material at least six weeks before the Site Visit. The Dean will also provide the ERC member(s) the ERC Report Template (QA to provide this).

In the case of engineering programme reviews and other concurrent cyclical and accreditation Reviews, the ERC will be selected by the relevant accreditation board. If the ERC selected by the accreditation board does not satisfy the minimum requirements described above, additional reviewers will be selected according to the process described above. For example, in the case of an engineering review, the external reviewers will be chosen by the CEAB, but RMC will select the internal external reviewer since the QC requires such a reviewer while the CEAB does not.

2.4.3 The Site Visit

The Site Visit lasts two days, during which time, the ERC will meet first with the VPA who will brief them about their role and obligations, essential to achieving a productive site visit. The ERC team is responsible for identifying:

- a. The programme's notably strong and creative attributes;
- b. The programme's respective strengths, areas for improvement, and opportunities for enhancement;
- c. Recommend specific steps to be taken to improve the programme, distinguishing between those the programme can itself take and those that require external action;
- d. Recognize the institution's autonomy to determine priorities for funding, space and faculty allocation; and
- e. Respect the confidentiality required for all the aspects of the review process.

The ERC will then meet with the Dean(s). The ERC will then meet with key faculty members, including the Programme Head, Associate Chairs,

staff, and undergraduate and graduate students. Each of these meetings will be confidential and will be conducted privately, with only the ERC and the other party/parties involved present (i.e., only staff, or only undergraduate students, etc.). The ERC will conduct a tour of the physical resources of the programme under review, including classrooms, labs, offices and libraries. The ERC will not discuss the outcomes of these meetings, and of the Site Visit in general, except with each other and in the ERC Report. In addition, the ERC should be given an office space on campus to use as a base and as a place to hold private discussions about their experiences of the Site Visit and about their plans for the review report. The ERC will meet privately at the end of the first day to discuss the progress of the Site Visit and to compare notes. Time must also be set aside in the afternoon of the second day for the ERC to discuss the report and to divide up the tasks associated with it before the end of the Site Visit.

2.4.4 The ERC Report

Once the Site Visit has been completed, the ERC will compile its report (template is found on the RMC website) and submit it electronically to the Dean(s). Once received, the appropriate Dean(s) will review the report. If in the Dean's opinion the ERC Report does not address components as required, it may be returned to the ERC members to highlight areas requiring further commentary. Should the ERC Report be satisfactory, the Dean will forward it to the VPA, the Head of the programme under review, and to QA. The ERC should take no longer than 6 weeks after the site visit to compile and submit its report. The report is to be submitted electronically. It is acknowledged that, in the case of CEAB visits, the report timing follows a different schedule and may differ greatly from lead-times cited here. ERC claims for travel and expenses may be submitted to the Dean's Office directly after the completion of the Site Visit, and reviewers' honoraria will be paid by the Dean's Office upon receipt of the ERC report.

2.4.5 Structure of the ERC Report

Although the ERC Report will ultimately be accessible to all students and staff of the university, with the sole exception of portions that are directly related to confidential personnel issues, until such time that the FAR has been approved by RMC Senate, ERC members shall consider the content of the ERC Report confidential.

The ERC report will be prepared based on input from all ERC members, though members of the ERC may divide as they like the tasks associated with producing the various components of the report. The report presents in detail the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the ERC members. The report's structure should echo that of the Self-Study report so that each section corresponds to the same section of the Self-Study, and it should include the following:

1. Scope of the review

- a) Programme reviewed.
- b) Documents reviewed as part of the Self-Study and as part of the Site Visit.
- c) Description of the conduct and schedule of the Site Visit.
- d) Individuals and groups met at the Site Visit.
- e) Facilities toured at the Site Visit.
- f) Adequacy of Site Visit arrangements such as meeting rooms, transportation and accommodations.

2. RMC Mission and Degree Level Expectations

- a) Consistency of the programme with the objectives of the institution's mission and development plan.
- b) Consistency of the programme with the standards, educational goals and learning objectives/outcomes of the degree, so that graduates may demonstrate achievement of its degree level expectations.
- c) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the methods for assessing student achievement of the defined learning outcomes and degree learning expectations.
- d) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the means of assessment, especially in the students' final year of the programme, in clearly demonstrating achievement of the programme learning objectives and the institution's (or the Programme's own) statement of Degree Level Expectations.

3. Programme-related Data

- a) Measures of performance, including comparison to applicable provincial, national and professional standards.
- b) State of the discipline: evaluation of the programme's self-assessment in the context of other programmes, provincially, nationally and internationally.

4. Methodology

- a) List of the members of the ERC, and a brief note of how each contributed to the report and how the report was compiled.

5. Review Criteria and Quality Indicators

- a) Admission requirements: appropriateness of the admission requirements, e.g., achievement and preparation, for the educational objectives of the institution and the programme.
- b) Curriculum:
 - i) Objectives of the programme are calibrated to compare to other institutional standards.
 - ii) Innovation or creativity in the content and delivery of the programme relative to other programmes.
 - iii) Modes of delivery are appropriate to meet programme's identified outcome.
- c) Quality indicators
 - i) Student performance:
 - a. Assessment of student performance in relation to national standards.
 - b. Methods used for the evaluation of student progress.
 - ii) Faculty performance:
 - a. Assessment of methods for monitoring and judging effectiveness of teaching and assuring quality in the educational experience offered to students.
 - b. Assessment of research and creative activities and of professional service and outreach.
 - c. Assessment of qualifications, research and scholarly record; class sizes; percentage of classes taught by permanent or non-permanent (contractual) faculty; numbers, assignments and qualifications of part-time or temporary faculty.

- d) **Quality Enhancement:** Assessment of initiatives taken to enhance the quality of the programme and the associated teaching and learning environment

- e) Additional graduate programme criteria
 - i) Monitoring of time-to-completion in relation to programme length.

 - ii) Quality and availability of graduate supervision.

 - iii) Definition and application of indicators that provide evidence of faculty, student and programme quality, for example:
 - a. Faculty: funding, honours and awards, and commitment to student mentoring.

 - b. Students: grade-level for admission, scholarly output, success rates in provincial and national scholarships, competitions, awards and commitment to professional and transferable skills.

 - c. Programme: evidence of a programme structure and faculty research that will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience.

 - d. Sufficient graduate level courses that students will be able to meet at least two-thirds of their course requirements through courses at this level.

- f) Academic services and resources that directly contribute to the academic quality of the programme under review:
 - i) Effective use of existing human, physical and financial resources to deliver both on-site and distance programmes.

 - ii) External funding sources.

 - iii) Infrastructure.

6. Response to Previous Concerns: effectiveness of the programme's response to concerns identified in prior reviews.

7. Areas in Need of Improvement: weaknesses of the programme and suggestions for improvement.

8. Areas Holding Promise for Enhancement: strengths of the programme and suggestions for its continued development.

9. Areas of High or Exceptional Achievement: identification and commendation of the programme's notably strong and creative attributes.

10. Future Plans: comments on the programme's plans for the continued development at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and makes recommendations for improvements to the programme to be implemented in the next 6 or 8 years, depending on the degree.

The report may include additional sections as the ERC deems necessary, including a confidential section dealing with personnel; this section would be made available only to the Head, the Dean(s), and the VP Academic.

2.5 Programme Response to the ERC Report

Upon receipt of the ERC Report from the Dean, the Programme Head will make it available for comment to faculty, staff and administrators who were involved in the preparation of the Self-Study. The commentary gathered in this exercise will constitute an informal response to the ERC report. In addition to commenting on the findings and recommendations of the report itself, respondents may offer to the Programme Head feedback on the Site Visit and make suggestions about how the visit could be improved. The Programme Head can solicit feedback about experiences with the ERC from students and other groups at this stage as well. These responses should go directly to the Programme Head and need not reflect a consensus, but may reflect a range of opinion from the programme's various stakeholders.

Next, the Programme Head will use the ERC report and information obtained from the consultation to create the Programme Response to the ERC report. It should, include commentary on the following:

- a) The plans and recommendations proposed in the Self-Study report.
- b) The comments and recommendations advanced by the ERC.
- c) The Programme response to the ERC comments and recommendations.

The Programme Head will submit the entire file, including the Self-Study report, ERC Report and the Programme response to the appropriate Dean(s) in order to assist the latter in preparing the Final Assessment Report (FAR). The FAR, written by the Dean(s), will include a summary of the ERC Report and the Programme Response and specifically the programme proposals regarding:

- a) Implementation of the various recommendations.
- b) Any changes in organization, policy or governance that would be necessary to meet the recommendations.

- c) The resources, financial and otherwise, that would be necessary to support the implementation of the recommendations.
- d) A timeline for the implementation of the Programme recommendations.

2.6 Final Assessment Report

- a) The appropriate Dean(s) will assess the Programme Response for completeness and request clarification or elaboration if necessary
- b) Using information from the Programme Response, the appropriate Dean(s) will prepare the FAR. The FAR provides the institutional synthesis of the external evaluation, internal responses and assessments, and:
 - i) Identifies any significant strengths of the programme.
 - ii) Identifies opportunities for programme improvement and enhancement.
 - iii) Sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that are selected for implementation.
 - iv) Includes an implementation plan that identifies the following:
 - a. The person(s) responsible for implementing each approved recommendation.
 - b. The person(s) responsible for providing any resources made necessary by those recommendations.
 - c. Timelines for acting on each recommendation.
 - d. The person(s) responsible for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations.
 - v) May include a confidential section (where personnel issues are addressed).
 - vi) Includes an institutional Executive Summary, exclusive of any such confidential information, and suitable for publication on the web.

2.6.1 Senate Review and Submission Approval

The VP Academic will submit the Final Assessment Report including the institutional Executive Summary to the Senate for its approval.

2.6.2 Final Assessment Report Distribution

The VP Academic will have the Final Assessment Report and the Executive Summary translated in both official languages and will distribute the FAR (excluding all confidential information) to the QC and the Senate as well as to the Programme Head and Faculty and other RMC internal stakeholders. A copy of the Report will also be forwarded to QA at this time and arrange to have the Executive Summary and the Final Assessment Report posted to the RMC website.

The Final Assessment Report should be submitted to the QC within 2 weeks of the Senate approval.

2.7 Implementation of recommendations and ongoing monitoring

Progress on implementing the recommended changes is monitored by the Programme Head in consultation with programme faculty, and reported to the appropriate Dean(s) by the Head, in writing, by not later than 15 June each academic year. The appropriate Dean(s) will arrange to have all programme annual implementation reports added to the appropriate sections of the RMC website, with a copy sent to QA for audit purposes.

2.8 Review of Joint Programmes

At the time of writing, RMC has only one joint programme, a graduate programme in Geoengineering which it offers in collaboration with Queen's University. Should other joint programmes be instituted at the university, however, it is anticipated that the review process will adhere to the process established by the example of Geoengineering. For the sake of convenience, Cyclical Reviews of this programme will be carried out according to the schedule and procedures established by Queen's University in its QUQAP, but the responsibility to prepare the Self-Study, select external reviewers, provide feedback on the ERC report, and prepare the FAR and Implementation Plan will be split between the two universities, with both universities participating in all of these processes. In addition, both campuses will be visited by the external reviewers and both institutions will post identical FAR on their respective websites. The FAR and Implementation Plan will, however, go through the appropriate governance processes at each institution, and at RMC these reports and other important documentation related to the review process will be made available in both official languages, in accordance with RMC policy.

3. NEW PROGRAMME APPROVALS

3.1 The New Programme Approval Process

The process for a new academic programme meeting the requirements of the OUCQA essentially consists of three aspects. The primary component is the drafting of a detailed proposal by the RMC academic department(s) wishing to initiate a new programme; the RMC Board of Governors' approval to proceed with the proposal; and the internal review of the proposal. This internal approval procedure is augmented by two additional reviews:

- 1) An external peer review of the proposal early in the process.

- 2) A final approval by the Quality Council after the final RMC internal approval but before the programme is actually offered.

Graduate programmes wishing to declare new fields, which are considered to be major modifications, may request the endorsement of the Quality Council before advertising said fields, but this process follows the guidelines for changes to an existing programme outlined below in section 4 of this IQAP.

The VP Academic is the authoritative contact between RMC and the Quality Council, and QA will provide guidance and support, based on this IQAP manual, in the review process if necessary.

3.2 Procedure for New Programme Approval

3.2.1 Preparation of the New Programme Proposal Brief

The brief is prepared by the Programme Head and designated programme faculty, in accordance with the requirements outlined below. To aid in this activity, a 'New Programmes Approval Action and Document Receipt Checklist' will be provided by QA.

1. Objectives

- a) Place of the programme within the institution's mission and academic plans.

- b) Programme's requirements and associated learning outcomes in addressing the institution's own undergraduate or graduate Degree Level Expectations.

- c) Degree nomenclature.

2. Admission Requirements

- a) Programme's admission requirements for the learning outcomes established for completion of the programme.

- b) Alternative requirements, if any, for admission into a graduate, second-entry or undergraduate programme, such as minimum grade point average, additional languages or portfolios, along with the programme's guidelines for recognition of prior work or learning experience.

3. Structure

- a) Programme's structure and regulations to meet specified programme learning outcomes and degree level expectations.

- b) For graduate programmes, a clear rationale for programme length that ensures that the programme requirements can be reasonably completed within the proposed time period.

4. Programme Content

- a) Ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study.

- b) Identification of any unique curriculum or programme innovations or creative components.

- c) For research-focused graduate programmes, clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion.

- d) Evidence that each graduate student in the programme is required to take a minimum of two-thirds of the course requirements from among graduate level courses.

5. Mode of Delivery

Proposed mode(s) of delivery to meet the intended programme learning outcomes and Degree Level Expectations (Appendix 3).

6. Assessment of Teaching and Learning

- a) Proposed methods for the assessment of student achievement of the intended programme learning outcomes and Degree Level Expectations.

- b) Plans for documenting and demonstrating the level of performance of students, consistent with the institution's statement of its Degree Level Expectations.

7. Resources for All Programmes

- a) Administrative unit's planned utilization of existing human, physical and financial resources, and any institutional commitment to supplement those resources, to support the programme.
- b) Number and quality of faculty who are competent to teach and/or supervise in the programme.
- c) Evidence that there are adequate resources to sustain the quality of scholarship produced by undergraduate students as well as graduate students' scholarship and research activities, including library support, information technology support, and laboratory access.
- d) Proposed budget for the programme, with clarification of whether the programme is to be cost-recovery.

8. Resources for Graduate Programmes Only

- a) Evidence that faculty have the recent research or professional/clinical expertise needed to sustain the programme, promote innovation and foster an appropriate intellectual climate.
- b) Where appropriate to the programme, evidence that financial assistance for students will be sufficient to ensure adequate quality and numbers of students.
- c) Evidence of how supervisory loads will be distributed, and the qualifications and appointment status of faculty who will provide instruction and supervision.

9. Resources for Undergraduate Programmes Only

Evidence of and planning for adequate numbers and quality of:

- (a) Faculty and staff to achieve the goals of the programme.
- (b) Plans and the commitment to provide the necessary resources in step with the implementation of the programme.
- (c) Planned/anticipated class sizes.
- (d) Provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities (if required).
- (e) The role of adjunct and part-time faculty.

10. Quality and Other Indicators

a) Definition and use of indicators that provide evidence of quality of the faculty (e.g., qualifications, research, innovation and scholarly record; appropriateness of collective faculty expertise to contribute substantively to the proposed programme).

b) Evidence of a programme structure and faculty research that will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience.

3.2.2 Submission to the RMC Board of Governors (BoG)

The brief will be vetted by the appropriate Dean then submitted via the appropriate academic channels to the RMC Board of Governors for review and subsequent approval and authority to proceed with the creation of the new programme. A copy of the brief will also be forwarded to QA.

3.2.3 Submission to the Internal Review Committee (IRC)

Upon the approval from the BoG to continue with the process, the brief will be submitted through the appropriate Dean to the relevant Internal Review Committee (IRC) – Syllabus Committee for undergraduate programmes, Graduate Studies Committee for post-graduate programmes, for subsequent recommendation through the Faculty Council, towards a final approval by Senate. The IRC will review the proposal for completeness in accordance with section 3.2.1. Should the IRC deem that further elaboration or clarification is necessary; the proposal will be returned to the Programme Head to make appropriate revisions. The proposal would then be resubmitted to the IRC for its review.

3.2.4 Selection of External Reviewers

The Programme Head, in consultation with the programme faculty members, will nominate potential external reviewers. There must be at least one reviewer for new undergraduate programmes and two for new graduate programmes. In the case of bilingual programmes, at least one reviewer should be bilingual. Site Visits are required in most cases. The Programme Head therefore must confirm with the Dean's office that the necessary financial resources are available for the cost of any anticipated Site Visit before asking the Dean to extend the invitation to the prospective reviewers.

The process for selecting External Reviewers for a Site Visit is as follows:

- a) Three to five names of recommended External Reviewers will be put forward, ranked in order of preference, if applicable, and submitted to the appropriate Dean by the Head of the programme under review
- b) The reviewers will normally be associate or full professors, or the equivalent, with programme management experience, and will be at arm's length from the department proposing the new programme
- c) At the same time, the Head will identify several two-day blocks suitable for the Site Visit
- d) The Dean will make final decisions on the external reviewer(s)
- e) The Dean will send written invitations to the proposed reviewers inviting them to serve and including the possible dates for the Site Visit. Based on responses from the reviewers, the date of the Site Visit will be finalized
- f) The Dean's office will arrange all travel and accommodations for the External Reviewers and begin the process of arranging payment of honoraria for them
- g) Deans will complete an ERC Verification Checklist to be returned to QA. Care will be taken by the appropriate Dean(s) to vet each reviewer for any possible conflict of interest. Additional ERC members from industry or professions may be assigned in certain fields as appropriate (i.e., especially in professional programmes)

3.2.5 Submission for External Review

After revisions of the New Programme Proposal Brief deemed appropriate by the Department following the internal review, the Programme Head will submit the document through the appropriate Dean to the external reviewers who have agreed to carry out the review. During the review process, the office of the Faculty Dean will be the liaison between the programme and the ERC while documents are in play; all documentation related to the New Programme Proposal, the Reviewer's Report, and the Internal Response is to be handled exclusively by the Dean's Office to obviate direct communication between the programme and the External Reviewers, and copies of all documentation should be forwarded to QA at the time of their circulation. External reviews of new graduate programme proposals must incorporate a Site Visit. External reviews of new undergraduate programme proposals will normally be conducted on-site, but may be conducted by desk audit, video-conference or an equivalent

method if the External Reviewer is satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable, and so states in writing to the Programme Head.

3.2.6 External Reviewers' Report

Excepting occasions when two languages are used or when contrary circumstances apply, the ERC will normally provide a joint report that appraises the standards and quality of the proposed programme and addresses the criteria set out in Section 2.1 of the *Framework* document [Reference A], including the associated faculty and material resources. They will also be invited to acknowledge any clearly innovative aspects of the proposed programme together with recommendations on any essential or otherwise desirable modifications. A copy of the ERC's Report will be forwarded to QA at this time as well.

3.2.7 Internal Response

Upon receipt of the ERC's Report through the Faculty Dean, the Programme Head will draft the internal response to the ERC Report, in consultation with the members of the department. This response will be forwarded to the appropriate Dean and to QA.

3.2.8 Submission for Further Recommendations and Faculty Council Approval

In the case of undergraduate programmes, the Programme Proposal brief, amended as deemed appropriate by the Internal Review Committee, along with the External Reviewers' Report and the internal response, will be submitted for Faculty Council's recommendation via the Syllabus Committee and Faculty Board, to the Senate for its approval.

In the case of post-graduate programmes, the Programme Proposal brief, amended as deemed appropriate by the department, along with the External Reviewers' Report and the internal response, will be submitted for recommendations for approval by Senate via the Graduate Studies Committee and onward transmission directly to Faculty Council. Approval of the Programme Brief for graduate programmes goes through the Graduate Studies Committee which is responsible for advising Faculty Council on all aspects of graduate studies, including questions of resources (funding, library, computing, space, etc.) and student quality of life (civilian/military culture, fees, etc.), and for serving as the Graduate Studies Syllabus Committee in recommending graduate studies syllabus changes to Faculty Council, such as approval and deletion of graduate courses, regulations on eligibility, admission to the Graduate Studies faculty, requirements for graduate degrees, etc.

In both cases, the Faculty Dean will present his or her review and recommendations to Faculty Council, including budgetary and staffing implications of the programme, if approved. A copy will be forwarded to QA.

3.2.9 Senate Approval

If the proposal receives the support of Faculty Council, the Brief is submitted to Senate for final internal approval. The Faculty Dean will ensure that the entire package (Proposal Brief, Reviewers' Report and Internal Response) is prepared and submitted to Senate for final approval. The Secretary of the Senate will send a copy of the key portions of the Senate minutes concerning the proposal to QA for audit purposes.

3.2.10 Submission to Quality Council

If approved by Senate, the programme proposal package will be sent to the Quality Council Secretariat by the VP Academic, requesting approval to deliver the programme.

3.2.11 Delivery of the New Programme

The new programme must be delivered within 36 months of Quality Council approval, or that approval will lapse. However, no students may be admitted to the proposed programme until QC approval is received.

3.2.12 Announcement of the New Programme

Following its submission to the Quality Council, the institution may announce its intention to offer the programme, provided that clear indication is given that approval by the Quality Council is pending and that no offers of admission will be made until and unless the programme is approved by the Council. At RMC, departments wishing to announce the planned offering of a new programme awaiting approval by the Quality Council must first receive permission in writing from the VP Academic.

3.2.13 Ongoing Monitoring of New Programme Implementation

Progress on implementing the new programme is monitored by the Programme Head in consultation with programme faculty, and reported to the Faculty Dean by the Head, in writing, not later than 15 June of the first academic year of implementation. The Faculty Dean will assess the progress and initiate any action required. The Dean will send a copy of the programme implementation report and the follow-on action initiated, in writing, to QA for audit purposes.

A further progress report on implementation will be submitted to the Faculty Dean by the Programme Head, in writing, not later than 15 June of the third academic year of implementation. The Faculty Dean will assess

the progress and initiate any action required, including the Dean's decision as to whether any further progress reports are required before the next cyclical review. The Dean will send a copy of the progress report and the follow-on action initiated, in writing, to QA.

All subsequent progress reports will follow the same procedure, including the submission of copies by the Dean to QA.

3.2.14 Cyclical Review

After programme delivery approval by the Quality Council, the new programme will be subject to the usual cyclical review process of Section 2 in this manual, beginning no more than the six or eight years after the date of the initial enrolment, depending on the degree.

4. CHANGES TO EXISTING PROGRAMMES

4.1 Internal Process for Major Changes to Programmes

Major changes to existing programmes do not require prior external review nor Quality Council approval in advance. However, they are subject to the same cyclical review processes and Quality Council audits as other RMC programmes. For these reasons, the procedures to be used in such cases will consist of a streamlined version of the processes in Section 3. There will be no external review and related processes, nor will Senate and QC approval be needed. Only Sections 3.2.1, 3.2.3, 3.2.7 and 3.2.8 are required. Course changes will continue to follow the existing RMC processes, in which the Programme Head submits the proposed changes for approval via memorandum to Faculty Board through Syllabus Committee (for undergraduate courses) or to Faculty Council through Graduate Studies Committee (for graduate courses). However, major programme changes must meet the requirements below. To assist in this activity, QA will provide a 'Changes to Existing Programmes Action and Document Checklist'. The Syllabus Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee will be the authorities who decide if changes to their respective programmes meet the criteria of major modifications as defined below.

At RMC, the following will constitute major changes to a programme since its previous cyclical review. Examples include:

- a) A change of more than 20% in the number or type of required secondary school graduation courses required for admission to an undergraduate programme.
- b) Any change in degree type or levels acceptable for admission to a post-graduate programme.
- c) Any change in the minimum number of total course credits required for graduation from a programme.
- d) Any change greater than 10% in the minimum number of course credits of a specified type required for graduation from a programme (e.g., required courses for a major, number of Arts courses in a Science programme, number of complementary courses in an Engineering programme etc.).
- e) Any addition or deletion of an undergraduate thesis or capstone engineering project.
- f) A change of more than 20% in the number of required courses during the final 50% of an undergraduate programme.
- g) Any change to the requirements for graduate programme candidacy examinations, field studies or residence requirements.

- h) Changes to the programme content that affect the learning outcomes in more than 10% of the courses in a programme.
- i) The addition of a new major stream or designation of a new named specialization in any degree programme.
- j) A reduction of more than 25% in the number of suitably qualified, full time faculty available to supervise theses in a graduate programme.
- k) An increase of more than 25% in the number of different courses offered in any particular mode of delivery in a given programme.
- l) A change of more than 20% in the laboratory time forming part of an undergraduate science or engineering programme.
- m) Any material reduction in the routine availability to students of library or other essential resources necessary for the completion of a programme.
- n) Any material reduction in the routine availability to students of information technology resources necessary for the completion of a programme.
- o) The merger of two or more programmes.
- p) At the graduate level, the introduction or deletion of a research project, research essay or thesis, course-only, co-op, internship or practicum option.
- q) Significant changes to the faculty delivering the programme: e.g. a large proportion of retirements or of new hires alters the area of research and teaching interests.
- r) A change in the language of programme delivery.
- s) The establishment of an existing degree programme at another institution or location.
- t) Significant changes to full- or part-time programme options.
- u) Significant change in a programme's mode of delivery—i.e. onsite courses become offered only online or vice-versa.
- v) Where applicable, the CEAB decides that the programme change is significant.

In the case of items in which unforeseen, significant changes have occurred beyond the control of the programme, a brief written notification is to be sent immediately to the Faculty Dean by the Programme Head or designate. The Dean and Department Head will investigate the issue, obtain the suggestions of programme faculty and, if time permits, present a proposed plan of action to Faculty Board and Faculty Council for further input. Appropriate action might include suspending admission of new students into the programme until the issue is resolved, making alternative arrangements for current students or other steps deemed appropriate to the case. The Principal will make the final decision on action and timing, in consultation with the Council of Deans.

Each calendar year RMC is required to submit a report to the Quality Council showing major programme changes that have been approved in accordance with our internal procedures. QA will prepare those reports in both English and French for submission by the VP Academic, based on changes approved by Faculty Council. Minor changes will be scrutinized only at the cyclical review stage.

4.2 Expedited Programme Approvals

4.2.1 Circumstances in which the Expedited Approval Procedure Applies

Under certain circumstances, the Quality Council permits a faster approval process under the rubric of Expedited Approvals.

The process will apply when:

- a) There is a proposal for a new Collaborative Programme, or
- b) There is a proposal for a new for-credit graduate diploma, or
- c) There is a proposal for a new field in a graduate programme, or
- d) The process may apply if the university requests approval of Major Modifications to Existing Programmes, as already defined through the RMC IQAP, proposed for a degree programme or programme of specialization.

4.2.2 RMC Process for Expedited Approvals

The internal processes for Expedited Approvals follow the streamlined version of the processes in Section 3. There will not be an external review and its related processes, nor will Senate approval be needed. Only Sections 3.2.1, 3.2.3, 3.2.7 and 3.2.8 are required. After final RMC approval by Faculty Council, the proposal is sent to the Quality Council for expedited approval.

5. Closure of Academic Programmes

In cases where RMC deems that a programme no longer fits with its priorities or the interests of students, it will undertake the steps to close the programme. In such cases the Department Head will prepare and submit to the Dean, a brief proposing the closure of a programme, outlining the rationale for the proposal. The Dean will submit the proposal to the Syllabus Committee (for UG programmes) or the Graduate Studies Committee (for PG programmes) for review and subsequent submission to the Senate for approval. A copy of all supporting documents will be forwarded to QA. During the Annual Report on Major Changes and Modifications, RMC will report this closure to the Quality Council.

APPENDIX 1

GLOSSARY

Accreditation Review: Professionally accredited programmes are subject to review by the relevant professional body (ex. The CEAB), on a cyclical basis. For the sake of expediency, RMC combines accreditation reviews with cyclical reviews.

Arm's Length Reviewer: Best practice in quality assurance ensures that reviewers are at arm's length from the programme under review. This means that reviewers/consultants are not close friends, current or recent (< 6 years) collaborators, former supervisors, advisors or colleagues. Arm's length does not mean that the reviewer must never have met or even heard of a single member of the programme. It does mean that reviewers should not be chosen who are likely, or perceived to be likely, to be predisposed, positively or negatively, about the programme.

Audit Report: After the desk audit and Site Visit of the relevant programmes, Quality Council auditors prepare a draft report, together with a summary of the principal findings suitable for subsequent publication. The VP Academic must submit a response to the draft report and summary within 60 days. The Executive Director of the Quality Council submits the final audit report and associated summary, together with the institutional response, to the Audit Committee of the Quality Council.

Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB): The CEAB is part of Engineers Canada and oversees the cyclical accreditation of all engineering programmes in Canada.

Changes to Existing Programmes: Course changes will continue to follow the existing RMC processes. However, major programme changes of any significance other than simple housekeeping must meet the requirements of the IQAP outlined in Section 4.

Cyclical Review: All existing academic programmes at RMC are subject to review on a cyclical basis and according to a university-wide schedule. The cyclical review of an existing programme has four principal components: a Self-Study, an External Evaluation, a Programme Response and Implementation Plan, and a Final Assessment Report with an Executive Summary.

Degree: An academic credential awarded on successful completion of a prescribed set and sequence of requirements at a specified standard of performance consistent with OCAV's degree Level Expectations and the institution's own expression of those Expectations. There are different types of degree (i.e., B.A., B.Sc., etc.) and different levels of degree (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate, etc.).

Department: The academic unit responsible for administering programmes. A department may be involved in the administration of more than one programme, especially in the case of interdisciplinary studies.

Diploma: Universities may grant diplomas in acknowledgement of students' participation in either for-credit or not-for-credit activities at the undergraduate and graduate level. Not-for-credit and for-credit undergraduate diploma programmes are not subject to approval or audit by the Quality Council.

Emphasis, Option, Minor programme (or similar): An identified set and sequence of courses, and/or other units of study, research and practice within an area of disciplinary or interdisciplinary study, which is completed on an optional basis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree, and may be recorded on the graduate's record. While requiring recognition in the IQAP, proposals for their introduction or modification do not require reference to the Quality Council unless they are part of a New Programme.

Expedited Approvals: Apply where a) an institution requests endorsement of the Quality Council to declare a new Field in a graduate programme or b) there is a proposal for a new Collaborative Programme; or c) there are proposals for new for-credit graduate diplomas; or d) there are Major Modifications to Existing Programmes, proposed for a degree programme or programme of specialization.

External Review: All cyclical reviews and new programme proposals must include a review by qualified referees from outside RMC. External review of new graduate programme proposals must incorporate a Site Visit. External review of new undergraduate programme proposals will normally be conducted on-site, but may be conducted by desk audit, video-conference or an equivalent method. The reviewers will normally be associate or full professors, or the equivalent, with programme management experience, and will be at arm's length from the department proposing the new programme.

External Review Committee (ERC): The ERC for a cyclical review is composed of either two or three members. ERC members will be active and respected in their fields and they will be at arm's length from the programme under review. Additional ERC members from industry or professions may be assigned in certain fields as appropriate (i.e., especially in professional programmes).

External Review Committee Report: Once the ERC has completed its Site Visit it prepares a single joint report, which presents in detail the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the ERC. The report's structure echoes that of the Self-Study report.

Field: In graduate programmes, field refers to an area of specialization or concentration (in multi/interdisciplinary programmes a clustered area of specialization) that is related to the demonstrable and collective strengths of the programme's faculty. Institutions are not required to declare fields at either the master's or doctoral level. Institutions may wish, through an expedited approval process, to seek the endorsement of the Quality Council.

Final Assessment Report: The report is prepared by the appropriate Dean(s) on behalf of the VP Academic. It assesses the programme response to the self-study and external evaluation. The Final Assessment Report should be submitted no more than 6 weeks after receipt of the ERC report, and should include an Executive Summary, exclusive of any confidential information to be published on the university's website.

Implementation Plan: A prioritized list of activities that will take place over a given period which includes tasks, the person or people in charge of carrying out the tasks, the resources required to achieve the task and the timeline to expected completion.

Intended Learning Outcomes: Specific expected skill attainments in individual degree programmes, as well as required knowledge in broader, more general subjects. Each programme will identify its own intended learning outcomes with reference to RMC's UDLEs and GDLEs, listed in Appendix 3, and update them as necessary as part of each Cyclical Review.

Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP): A protocol for reviews of academic programmes. IQAPs must comply with the Quality Council's Framework document, but institutions also add to the Framework guidelines to reflect their own unique identities and goals.

Internal Response: The written response to external review of a new programme proposal.

Internal Review Committee: Refers to the Syllabus Committee for undergraduate programmes, and the Graduate Studies Committee for post-graduate programmes.

Major Modifications to Existing Programmes: A significant change in the requirements, intended learning outcomes or human and other resources associated with a degree programme or programme of specialization include a) Requirements that differ significantly from those existing at the time of the previous cyclical programme review; b) Significant changes to the learning outcomes; c) Significant changes to the faculty engaged in delivering the programme and/or to the essential physical resources as may occur, for example, where there have been changes to the existing mode(s) of delivery (e.g., different campus, online delivery, inter-institutional collaboration); d) The addition of a new field to an existing graduate programme. A full definition of what RMC considers to constitute a Major Modification is to be found in section 4 of this IQAP.

Mode of Delivery: The means or medium used in delivering a programme (e.g., lecture format, distance, on-line, problem-based, compressed part-time, different campus, inter-institutional or other non-standard form of delivery).

New Programme: Any degree, degree programme, or programme of specialization which has not been previously approved by the Quality Council, its predecessors, or any internal RMC approval processes that previously applied without external authorization. A change of name, only, does not constitute a new programme; nor does the inclusion of a new programme of specialization where another with the same designation already exists (e.g., a new honours programme where a major with the same designation already exists).

New Programme Proposals: A brief prepared by the Programme Head and designated programme faculty outlining the proposed programme's rationale, requirements, title, etc. This brief is then reviewed by an internal review committee and then by external reviewers. If, after these reviews and appropriate revisions the Senate approves the new programme, the proposal is submitted to the Quality Council for approval. Upon approval, the new programme may be announced.

Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (OUCQA or Quality Council): The quality assurance body for Ontario universities established in 2010 by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents. The Quality Council operates at arm's length from universities and from government to ensure that Ontario has a rigorous quality assurance framework.

Programme: The complete set and sequence of courses, combinations of courses and/or other units of study, research and practice prescribed by an institution for the fulfillment of the requirements of a particular degree. Not to be confused with a department or a degree. A programme is administered by a department, or in the case of interdisciplinary programmes, by more than one department. A department may administer more than one programme, and a programme may lead to more than one choice of degree.

Programme Head: All references to Programme Heads apply to Department Heads or to Programme Chairs when the programme is governed by an interdepartmental programme committee.

Programme Proposal Brief: To initiate the process of launching a new programme, this brief is prepared by the Programme Head and designated programme faculty and submitted to the relevant internal review committee – Syllabus Committee for undergraduate programmes, Graduate Studies Committee for post-graduate programmes.

Programme Response: Produced by the Programme Head, this document responds in detail to the issues raised by the External Evaluation during a Cyclical Review. The Programme Response should recommend plans to implement suggestions made by the ERC.

Quality Assurance Framework: The specifications set forth by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance with which all Ontario universities' Institutional Quality Assurance

Processes must comply. The Framework identifies minimum standards for the conduct of New Programme Approvals, Expedited Approvals, Cyclical Reviews, and Audits of IQAPs by the Quality Council.

Quality Council Audit: An audit conducted to determine whether or not RMC, since the last audit, has acted in compliance with the provisions of its IQAP for Cyclical Programme Reviews, as ratified by the Quality Council.

Quality Indicators: Measures of programme performance, including comparison to applicable provincial, national, and professional standards. Quality indicators may include admission requirements, curriculum structure, examples of student work, pass/fail rates in courses, faculty teaching loads, etc.

Reviewers' Report: This report is produced when a new programme is reviewed by external reviewers.

Self-Study: An internal evaluation and report written by the Programme Head or chair and department members, and submitted to the appropriate Dean(s), the VP Academic and the External Review Committee (ERC).

Self-Study Brief: The Head of a programme under review submits a short brief to the VP Academic through the Faculty Dean, listing all modalities, locations and levels of the programme under review. After the VP Academic approves this brief, the review process can begin.

Self-Study Report: An internal evaluation and report written by the Programme Head and programme faculty, and submitted to the appropriate Dean, the VP Academic and, ultimately, to the External Review Committee (ERC). A template for the Self-Study is found online

Site Visit: External reviewers conduct Site Visits for cyclical reviews and for programme audits. These visits are arranged through the office of the Faculty Dean, and the schedule for the Site Visit should be prepared at least a month in advance to allow for any necessary changes.

Specialization (major, honours programme, concentration or similar): An identified set and sequence of courses, and/or other units of study, research and practice within an area of disciplinary or interdisciplinary study, which is completed in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree, and is recorded on the graduate's academic record.

University Undergraduate and Graduate Degree Level Expectations (UUDLEs and GDLEs): These expectations outline specific expected skill attainments in individual degree programmes, as well as required knowledge in broader, more general subjects. Appendix 3 lists the current, approved RMC degree level expectations, and all programmes are expected to develop their own programme-specific DLEs to be housed outside of the RMC IQAP and to be updated as part of each Cyclical Review.

APPENDIX 2 ACRONYMS

Acronym	Full Title
CEAB	<i>Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board</i>
CAF	<i>Canadian Armed Forces</i>
COU	<i>Council of Ontario Universities</i>
DND	<i>Department of National Defence</i>
ERC	<i>External Review Committee</i>
FAR	<i>Final Assessment Report</i>
FB	<i>Faculty Board</i>
FC	<i>Faculty Council</i>
FIPPA	<i>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i>
FR	<i>Final Assessment Report for the Cyclical Review</i>
GDLES	<i>Graduate Degree Level Expectations</i>
GSC	<i>Graduate Studies Committee</i>
IQAP	<i>Institutional Quality Assurance Process</i>
ITAL	<i>Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning</i>
MTCU	<i>Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities</i>
OCAV	<i>Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents</i>
OCGS	<i>Ontario Council on Graduate Studies</i>
OUCQA	<i>Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance, or the Quality Council</i>
QA	<i>Quality Assurance, or RMC Office of Quality Assurance</i>
QC	<i>Quality Council, or the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance</i>
RETP	<i>Reserve Entry training Plan</i>
RMC	<i>Royal Military College of Canada</i>
ROTP	<i>Regular Officer Training Plan</i>
UPRAC	<i>Undergraduate Programme Review Audit Committee</i>
UTPNM	<i>University Training Plan for Non-Commissioned Members</i>
UUDLES	<i>University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations</i>

APPENDIX 3

RMC Degree Level Expectations (UUDLEs and GDLEs)

Note: Departments must articulate their own programme-specific DLEs, to be housed by the department in question.

	Baccalaureate/ bachelor's degree (general degrees)	Baccalaureate/ bachelor's degree honours (majors, honours and engineering)	Master's degree	Doctoral degree
1. Depth and breadth of knowledge	<p>a) General knowledge and understanding of many key concepts, methodologies, theoretical approaches and assumptions in a discipline</p> <p>b) Broad understanding of some of the major fields in a discipline, including, where appropriate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, and how the fields may intersect with fields in related disciplines</p> <p>c) Ability to gather, review, evaluate and interpret information relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline</p> <p>d) Some detailed knowledge in an area of the discipline</p> <p>e) Critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline</p> <p>f) Ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside the discipline</p> <p>In addition to meeting all of the provincial requirements above, all students in all disciplines should also have acquired skills and</p>	<p>a) Developed knowledge and critical understanding of the key concepts, methodologies, current advances, theoretical approaches and assumptions in a discipline overall, as well as in a specialized area of a discipline</p> <p>b) Developed understanding of many of the major fields in a discipline, including, where appropriate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, and how the fields may intersect with fields in related disciplines</p> <p>c) Developed ability to: i) gather, review, evaluate and interpret information; and ii) compare the merits of alternate hypotheses or creative options, relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline</p> <p>d) Developed, detailed knowledge of and experience in research in an area of the discipline</p> <p>e) Developed critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline</p> <p>f) Ability to apply learning</p>	<p>A systematic understanding of knowledge, including, where appropriate, relevant knowledge outside the field and/or discipline, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice.</p>	<p>A thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge that is at the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice including, where appropriate, relevant knowledge outside the field and/or discipline.</p>

	<p>knowledge in the following areas:</p> <p>a) ability to reason scientifically</p> <p>b) understanding of the basis of modern technology</p> <p>c) understanding of civics and the structure of the Canadian government</p> <p>d) knowledge of international affairs</p> <p>e) thorough grounding in military law and history</p> <p>f) thorough grounding in military theory and strategy</p> <p>g) thorough understanding of ethics and leadership</p>	<p>from one or more areas outside the discipline</p> <p>In addition to meeting all of the provincial requirements above, all students in all disciplines should also have acquired skills and knowledge in the following areas:</p> <p>a) ability to reason scientifically</p> <p>b) understanding of the basis of modern technology</p> <p>c) understanding of civics and the structure of the Canadian government</p> <p>d) knowledge of international affairs (for Science and Engineering only)</p> <p>e) thorough grounding in military law and history</p> <p>f) thorough grounding in military theory and strategy</p> <p>g) thorough understanding of ethics and leadership</p>		
<p>2. Knowledge of methodologies/ Research and scholarship</p>	<p>An understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to:</p> <p>a) evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques; and</p>	<p>An understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to:</p> <p>a) evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques;</p>	<p>A conceptual understanding and methodological competence that</p> <p>a) Enables a working comprehension of how established techniques of research and inquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;</p> <p>b) Enables a critical evaluation of current research and advanced research and</p>	<p>a) The ability to conceptualize, design, and implement research for the generation of new knowledge, applications, or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the research design or methodology in the light of unforeseen problems;</p> <p>b) The ability to make informed judgments on</p>

	b) devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods.	b) devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods; and c) describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship.	scholarship in the discipline or area of professional competence; and c) Enables a treatment of complex issues and judgments based on established principles and techniques; and, On the basis of that competence, has shown at least one of the following: a) The development and support of a sustained argument in written form; or b) Originality in the application of knowledge.	complex issues in specialist fields, sometimes requiring new methods; and c) The ability to produce original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, and to merit publication.
3. Level of application of knowledge	The ability to review, present, and interpret quantitative and qualitative information to: a) develop lines of argument; b) make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject(s) of study; and The ability to use a basic range of established techniques to: a) analyze information; b) evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study; c) propose solutions; and d) make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.	The ability to review, present and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative information to: a) develop lines of argument; b) make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject(s) of study; c) apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, both within and outside the discipline; d) where appropriate use this knowledge in the creative process; and The ability to use a range of established techniques to: a) initiate and undertake critical evaluation of	Competence in the research process by applying an existing body of knowledge in the critical analysis of a new question or of a specific problem or issue in a new setting.	The capacity to a) Undertake pure and/or applied research at an advanced level; and b) Contribute to the development of academic or professional skills, techniques, tools, practices, ideas, theories, approaches, and/or materials.

		arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and information; b) propose solutions; c) frame appropriate questions for the purpose of solving a problem; d) solve a problem or create a new work; and e) to make critical use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.		
4. Communication skills	The ability to communicate accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences.	The ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences.	The ability to communicate ideas, issues and conclusions clearly.	The ability to communicate complex and/or ambiguous ideas, issues and conclusions clearly and effectively.
5. Awareness of limits of knowledge	An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and how this might influence their analyses and interpretations.	An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to knowledge and how this might influence analyses and interpretations.	Cognizance of the complexity of knowledge and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.	An appreciation of the limitations of one's own work and discipline, of the complexity of knowledge, and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.
6. Autonomy and professional capacity	Qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement and other activities requiring: a) the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making; b) working effectively with others; c) the ability to identify and	Qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement and other activities requiring: a) the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility and accountability in both personal and group contexts; b) working effectively with others;	a) The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring: i) The exercise of initiative and of personal responsibility and accountability; and ii) Decision-making in complex situations; b) The intellectual independence required for continuing professional	a) The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex situations; b) The intellectual independence to be academically and professionally engaged and current;

	<p>address their own learning needs in changing circumstances and to select an appropriate programme of further study; and d) behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.</p> <p>RMC undergraduates must also attain qualities and transferable skills for the profession of arms, including:</p> <p>a) leadership skills in complex and difficult situations b) ethical behaviour in positions of power and morally complex situations</p>	<p>c) decision-making in complex contexts; d) the ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline and to select an appropriate programme of further study; e) and behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.</p> <p>RMC undergraduates must also attain qualities and transferable skills for the profession of arms, including:</p> <p>a) leadership skills in complex and difficult situations b) ethical behaviour in positions of power and morally complex situations</p>	<p>development;</p> <p>c) The ethical behaviour consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research; and d) The ability to appreciate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts.</p>	<p>c) The ethical behaviour consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research; and d) The ability to evaluate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts.</p>
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APPENDIX 4

TABLES OF ACTION ITEMS FOR FACULTY & STAFF

Table A4-1
ACTION ITEMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR
PROGRAMME CYCLICAL REVIEWS

Item (Table A4-1)	Programme Head	Faculty Dean	VP Academic	Timing	QA	Comments
Preliminary Email to advise departments of upcoming cyclic programme reviews in the following calendar year.			X	Mid-October		This will include info attachments, info QA including 'Cyclical Programme Review Action and Document Receipt Checklist'
Cyclic Programme Review Presentation	X		X	Mid-Nov	X	All stakeholders (Deans, Heads, Chairs, Registrar's Office, Librarian, Admin Assist, VPA)
Memo to initiate Cyclical Review Begin Self-Study	X		X	15 Jan		Copy to QA Programme Head and Team
Brief to VP Academic to define scope of review	X			due 15 Feb		Template will be provided by QA; submitted through the Faculty Dean; copy to QA
Solicit Survey Data				Mid-Feb	X	Email addresses of current/past students, faculty, instructors and technical staff
Approval of scope of review			X	End-Feb		Copy to QA
Distribute Surveys				15 Mar – 30 Apr	X	Class Climate Programme Review Surveys
Propose names of external reviewers to Faculty Dean	X			31 March		Arm's Length Review guide (Appendix 5) Dean selects and approves members
Selection of external reviewers		X		15 Apr		ERC Verification Checklist to be signed off by Dean(s), notifies QA

Item (Table A4-1)	Programme Head	Faculty Dean	VP Academic	Timing	QA	Comments
Invitations sent to external reviewers		X		30 Apr		Form letter available from the QA (Letter sent out from Dean)
Draft Self-Study Report to the Dean for his/her review and approval.	X			due 30 Jul		Template will be provided by QA; programmes to update programme-specific DLEs with each review; Submit to Dean(s) for review and approval. Dean will notify QA in writing that the SSR has been approved
Self-Study Report sent to reviewers (samples of student work).		X		Minimum of 6 weeks before Site Visit date		Dean sends (electronically) SSR and accompanying documents (ERC Report Template, copies of student work, etc). Copy to QA Site Visits held in Oct & Nov
Site Visit		X				Dean to arrange timing, funding and administrative details for Site Visit; Dean sets agenda for Site Visit (ERC meets with VPA first for briefing and instruction). Dean instructs ERC on their responsibilities. All travel, hospitality and other expenses associated with the Site Visit, including honoraria, are paid for from the Dean's budget.
ERC report received (electronically)		X		Due 6 weeks after Site Visit		Sent electronically to Dean (to review) to Head, VP Academic; copy to QA. Note that the Dean may return the ERC Report to the ERC if deemed incomplete
Programme Response document	X			4 weeks after receipt of the ERC Report		Drafted after internal response from programme faculty; submitted to Faculty Dean; copy to QA
Draft FAR and Executive Summary (includes Implementation Plan)			X	2 weeks after receipt of Programme Response		Drafted by Faculty Dean; copy to QA
Present Final Assessment Report		X				Faculty Dean via the VPA (for review) and subsequent submission and approval from the Senate, copy to QA

Item (Table A4-1)	Programme Head	Faculty Dean	VP Academic	Timing	QA	Comments
Submit FAR and Executive Summary for translation following approval					X	QA budget to pay for translation.
Submit Final Assessment Report without confidential personnel section, if any			X	Due at QC not later than 2 weeks after translation of ERC Report		To QC - Copies to Senate, Dean, Programme Head, Programme Faculty, QA
Post Executive Summary of the Final Assessment Report on the RMC website		X	X			Following QC approval, QA to post FAR and Executive Summary on RMC website.
Monitor Implementation Plan	X	X				
Report on Implementation	X					Progress on changes reported to Dean(s) in writing by June 15 each academic year; reported on RMC website; copy to QA

**Table A4-2
ACTION ITEMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR
NEW PROGRAMME PROPOSALS**

Item (Table A4-2)	Programme Head	Faculty Dean	Syllabus or Graduate Studies Committee	Faculty Board & Council	Dean's Council	VPA	Senate	BoG	QA	Comments
Preparation of the New Programme Proposal Brief	X								X	Submitted to the Faculty Dean; copy to QA, QA to provide 'New Programme Action and Document Checklist'
Submission to the BoG for approval to proceed	X							X		Submitted to the BoG via from Head/Chair, Dean, VPA then Principal
Submission to the Internal Review Committee		X								Faculty Dean is the intermediary between the Programme and the Review Committee; Syllabus Committee for undergraduate proposals, Graduate Studies Committee for post-graduate proposals; copies to QA
Written response to the Programme Head			X						X	Comments on the proposed programme itself, as well as the completeness of the brief in meeting the OUCQA requirements. QA to provide template. The comments are submitted to the Faculty Dean for onward transmission to the Programme Head. A copy is also submitted to QA

Item (Table A4-2)	Programme Head	Faculty Dean	Syllabus or Graduate Studies Committee	Faculty Board & Council	Dean's Council	VPA	Senate	BoG	QA	Comments
Propose names of External Reviewers to Faculty Dean	X									
Selection of External Reviewers		X								ERC Verification Checklist must be signed off by Dean(s). Copy to QA
Invitations sent to external reviewers by Dean(s)		X								Form letter available from QA. Copy to QA
Proposal Brief sent to Reviewers		X								The Faculty Dean is the intermediary for all communication and documentation between the Programme and the External Reviewers
Site Visit		X								Dean to arrange timing, funding and administrative details for Site Visit or obtain written confirmation that external reviewers do require a Site Visit. (ERC meets with VPA first). Dean sets agenda for Site Visit, and all travel, hospitality and other expenses associated with the Site Visit, including honoraria, are paid for from the Dean's budget.
External Reviewers' Report received		X								The Faculty Dean is the intermediary for all communication and documentation between the Programme and the External Reviewers; copy to QA (template from QA)

Item (Table A4-2)	Programme Head	Faculty Dean	Syllabus or Graduate Studies Committee	Faculty Board & Council	Dean's Council	VPA	Senate	BoG	QA	Comments
Programme Response (Internal Reponse)	X									Submitted to Syllabus or Graduate Studies Committee by the Programme Head through the Faculty Dean; copy to QA
Institutional Perspective document			X							Syllabus or GS Committee submits proposal package to Faculty Board or Faculty Council with their comments and recommendations; copy to QA
Comments on budgetary and other issues		X								
Recommendations				X						Recommendation to Senate
Final Internal Approval							X			Key portions of Senate minutes sent to QA for audit purposes
Submission to Quality Council							X			VP Academic to make submission on behalf of Senate; copy to QA
Announcement of the New Programme	X									Only after receipt of Quality Council approval to deliver the new programme; approval lapses if programme not delivered within 36 months
Monitoring of New Programme implementation	X									Written report to Dean(s) by June 15 of first year of implementation
Assessment of New Programme implementation		X								Initiates any action required and sends copy of Implementation Report and actions required to QA for audit purposes

3 rd Year Progress Report	X									Submit to Dean by June 15 of programme's 3 rd year
Assessment of 3 rd Year Progress Report		X								Assess progress and actions as before; assess whether further progress reports required before next Cyclical Review
Cyclical Review										As scheduled in normal cyclical review cycle

Table A4-3
ACTION ITEMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR
MAJOR PROGRAMME CHANGES

Item (Table A4-3)	Programme Head	Faculty Dean	Syllabus or Graduate Studies Committee	Faculty Board & Council	VP Academic	QA	Comments
Preparation of the Programme Change Proposal Brief	X					X	Proposal is submitted to Faculty Dean; copy to QA, QA to provide 'Programme Changes Action and Document Checklist'
Submission to the Internal Review Committee		X					Faculty Dean is the intermediary between the Programme and the Review Committee; Syllabus Committee for undergraduate proposals, Graduate Studies Committee for post-graduate proposals; copy to QA
Written response to the Programme Head			X			X	Comments on the proposed programme itself, as well as the completeness of the brief in meeting the OUCQA requirements are submitted to the Programme Head through the Faculty Dean. QA to provide template

Programme Response (Internal Response)	X						Submitted to Syllabus or Graduate Studies Committee through the Faculty Dean; copy to QA.
Institutional Perspective document			X				Syllabus or GS Committee submits proposal package to Faculty Board or Faculty Council with their comments and recommendations; copy to QA
Comments on budgetary and other issues		X					
Recommendations				X			
Final Internal Approval				X			Final approval by Faculty Council; copy to QA
Submission to Quality Council following the Expedited Approval process					X		If it is a proposal for a new collaborative programme or a new for-credit graduate diploma
Decision on submitting major changes for Expedited Approval					X		Decision made by the VP Academic after discussion of each particular case at the Deans' Council.
Announcement of the Programme Change	X						Only after receipt of Faculty Council approval , or Quality Council approval if submitted to QC for Expedited Approval; copy of documentation forwarded to QA

Cyclical Review							As scheduled in normal cyclical review cycle
Annual Report to Quality Council					X		Only major changes included in annual report drafted by Office of Quality Assurance for submission by VP Academic

APPENDIX 5: CHOOSING ARM'S LENGTH REVIEWERS

Best practice in quality assurance ensures that reviewers are at arm's length from the programme under review. This means that reviewers/consultants are not close friends, current or recent collaborators, former supervisors, advisors or colleagues.

Arm's length does not mean that the reviewer must never have met or even heard of a single member of the programme. It does mean that reviewers should not be chosen who are likely, or perceived to be likely, to be predisposed, positively or negatively, about the programme. It may be helpful to provide some examples of what does and does not constitute a close connection that would violate the arm's length requirement.

Examples of what may not violate the arm's length requirement:

- Appeared on a panel at a conference with a member of the programme.
- Served on a granting council selection panel with a member of the programme.
- Author of an article in a journal edited by a member of the programme, or a chapter in a book edited by a member of the programme.
- External examiner of a dissertation by a doctoral student in the programme.
- Presented a paper at a conference held at the university where the programme is located.
- Invited a member of the programme to present a paper at a conference organized by the reviewer, or to write a chapter in a book edited by the reviewer.
- Received a bachelor's degree from the university (especially if in another programme).
- Co-author or research collaborator with a member of the programme more than seven years ago.
- Presented a guest lecture at the university.
- Reviewed for publication a manuscript written by a member of the programme.

Examples of what may violate the arm's length requirement:

- A previous member of the programme or department under review (including being a visiting professor).
- Received a graduate degree from the programme under review.
- A regular co-author and research collaborator with a member of the programme, within the past seven years, and especially if that collaboration is ongoing.
- Close family/friend relationship with a member of the programme.
- A regular or repeated external examiner of dissertations by doctoral students in the programme.
- The doctoral supervisor of one or more members of the programme.

Additional Advice for Choosing External Reviewers/Consultants

External reviewers/consultants should have a strong track record as academic scholars and ideally should also have had academic administrative experience in such roles as undergraduate or graduate programme coordinators, department chair, dean, graduate dean or associated positions. This combination of experience allows a reviewer to provide the most valuable feedback on programme proposals and reviews.

ANNEX 1: THE QUALITY COUNCIL AUDIT PROCESS AT RMC

A.1 Purpose and timing of the Audit

The objective of the Quality Council audit is to determine whether or not RMC, since the last audit, has acted in compliance with the provisions of its IQAP for Cyclical Programme Reviews, as ratified by the Quality Council.

The routine audit process will occur once every eight years. Additional audits for specific institutions may take place within any cycle, as described below. The Quality Council consults with OCAV in establishing the schedule of institutional participation in the audit process within the eight-year cycle and publishes the agreed schedule on its website.

A.2 Steps in the Audit Process

A.2.1 Assignment of Auditors for the Conduct of the Audit

Normally, no fewer than three auditors, selected by the Executive Director of the Quality Council, conduct an institutional audit. These auditors will be at arm's length from the institution undergoing the audit. The Executive Director and a member of the Secretariat normally accompany the auditors on their Site Visit.

A.2.2 Selection of the Sample of Programmes for Audit

Auditors independently select programmes for audit, typically four undergraduate and four graduate cyclical programme reviews. At least one of the undergraduate programmes and one of the graduate programmes will be a New Programme or Major Modifications to an Existing Programme approved within the period since the previous audit.

Specific programmes may be added to the sample when the previous audit documented causes for concern, and when so directed in accordance with the *Framework* document, Section 5.2.5 (b) [Reference A]. When the institution itself so requests, specific programmes may also be audited. The RMC VP Academic will determine whether a specific audit is to be requested, in consultation with the Dean's Council.

A.2.3 Desk Audit of the Institutional Quality Assurance Practices

In preparation for a scheduled Site Visit, the auditors participate in a desk audit of the institution's quality assurance practices. Using the institution's records of the sampled cyclical programme reviews, together with associated documents, this audit tests whether the institution's practice conforms to its own IQAP, as ratified by the Quality Council. When an audit of the RMC IQAP has been communicated to the RMC by

the Quality Council, QA will provide the Council with the documents required.

The auditors will have access to all relevant documents and information to ensure they have a clear understanding of the RMC QA practices. The desk audit serves to raise specific issues and questions to be pursued during the Site Visit and to facilitate the conduct of an effective and efficient Site Visit.

The documentation to be submitted for the programmes to be audited will be compiled by QA, will include:

- a) All the documents and other information associated with each step of the RMC IQAP, as ratified by the Quality Council.
- b) The record of any revisions of the institution's IQAP, as ratified by the Quality Council.

Programme Heads or Deans wishing to provide any additional documents for a scheduled audit must request approval in writing, directed to the VP Academic. If approved, the VP Academic will direct QA accordingly.

During the desk audit, the auditors will also determine whether or not the RMC web-based publication of the Executive Summaries, and subsequent reports on the implementation of the review recommendations for the programmes included in the current audit, meet the requirements of *Framework* document Section 4.2.6 [Reference A].

The auditors undertake to preserve the confidentiality required for all documentation and communications and meet all applicable requirements of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation.

A.2.4 On-site Interaction with the Institution

After the desk audit, auditors normally visit the institution over two or three days. The principal purpose of the Site Visit is to answer questions and address information gaps that arose during the desk audit. Ultimately, the purpose of the Site Visit is for the auditors to get a sufficiently complete and accurate understanding of the institution's application of its IQAP so that they can meet their audit responsibilities.

In the course of the Site Visit, the auditors will speak with those identified by the IQAP as participants and in particular those accountable for various steps, responsibilities, and obligations in the process. The RMC VP Academic, in consultation with the auditors, will establish the programme and schedule for these interviews prior to the Site Visit.

A.2.5 Audit Report

1. Following the conduct of an institutional audit, the auditors prepare a report, which:
 - a) Describes the audit methodology and the verification steps used.
 - b) Provides a status report on the programme reviews carried out by the institution.
 - c) On the basis of the programmes audited, describes the institution's compliance with its IQAP as ratified by the Quality Council.
 - d) Identifies and records any notably effective policies or practices revealed in the course of the audit of the sampled programmes.
 - e) Where appropriate, makes suggestions and recommendations and identifies causes for concern.

Suggestions will be forward-looking, and are made by auditors when they identify opportunities for the Institution to strengthen its quality assurance practices. Suggestions do not convey any mandatory obligations and sometimes are the means for conveying the auditors' province-wide experience in identifying good, and even on occasion, best practices. Institutions are under no obligation to implement or otherwise respond to the auditors' suggestions, though they are encouraged to do so.

Recommendations are recorded in the auditors' report when they have identified failures to comply with the IQAP. These failures indicate discrepancies that weaken the integrity of academic standards or are necessary for effective quality assurance. The institution must address these recommendations.

Causes for concern: In some cases the auditors may identify that there is cause for concern. These may be potential structural weaknesses in quality assurance practices: for example, when, in two or more instances, the auditors identify inadequate follow-up monitoring (as called for in *Framework* Section 4.2.5[c]); a failure to make the relevant implementation reports to the appropriate statutory authorities (as called for in *Framework* Section 4.2.6.), or the absence of the Manual (as called for in *Framework* Section 4.2.8).

2. When the auditors have identified, with supporting reason and evidence, cause for concern, it will be reported to the Audit Committee and the institution. Following deliberation, including possible discussion with the institution, the Committee may then recommend that the Quality Council investigate by taking one of the following steps:
 - a) Directing specific attention by the auditors to the issue within the subsequent audit as provided for in *Framework* Section 5.2.2.
 - b) Scheduling a larger selection of programmes for the institution's next audit.
 - c) Requiring an immediate and expanded institutional audit (further sample) of the respective process(es).

The decision of the Quality Council will be reported to the institution by the Executive Director.

A.2.6 Disposition of the Audit Report and Summary

The auditors prepare a draft report, together with a summary of the principal findings suitable for subsequent publication. The Secretariat provides a copy of these to the RMC VP Academic, for comment. This consultation is intended to ensure that the report and associated summary do not contain errors or omissions of fact.

The VP Academic must submit a response to the draft report and summary within 60 days. This response becomes part of the official record, and the auditors may use it to revise their report and/or associated summary prior to their submission to the Audit Committee.

The Executive Director submits the final audit report and associated summary, together with the institutional response, to the Audit Committee for consideration and, when necessary, for consultation with the auditors. When satisfied that the auditors followed the required audit procedures correctly and that the university had an appropriate opportunity to respond, the Audit Committee recommends to the Quality Council approval of the report and associated summary. When a report or associated summary is rejected, the Council determines the actions to be taken.

A.2.7 Submission of the Audit Report to the Institution

The Secretariat sends the approved report and associated summary to the institution and to the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV), the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) for information.

A.2.8 Publication of Main Audit Findings

The Secretariat publishes the approved summary of the overall findings, together with a record of the recommendations on the Quality Council's website, and sends a copy of both to the institution for publication on its website. RMC will translate the Main Audit Findings in order to comply with the Official Languages Policy for publishing materials on government websites.

A.2.9 Institutional One-year Follow-up

Within a year of the publication of the final audit report, the institution will inform the auditors, through the Secretariat, of the steps it has taken to address the recommendations. The auditors will draft an accompanying commentary on the scope and adequacy of the institution's response, together with a draft summary of their commentary, suitable for web publication. The auditors' response and summary are then submitted to the Audit Committee for consideration. The Audit Committee will submit a recommendation to the Quality Council on whether or not to accept the institutional one-year follow-up response. When the Audit Committee is not satisfied with the reported institutional response, it recommends to the Quality Council the course of action to be taken.

A.2.10 Web Publication of One-year Follow-up Report

The Secretariat publishes the auditors' summary of the scope and adequacy of the institution's response on the Quality Council website and sends a copy to the institution for publication on its web site and to OCAV, COU and MTCU for information. RMC will translate the One-year Follow-up Report in order to comply with the Official Languages Policy for publishing materials on government websites.