



ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
COUNCIL on QUALITY ASSURANCE

**SUMMARY OF AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE
SCOPE OF NIPISSING UNIVERSITY'S
RESPONSE TO THE QUALITY ASSURANCE
AUDIT**

APRIL 2017

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AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE INSTITUTIONAL ONE-YEAR FOLLOW-UP RESPONSE ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDIT OF NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council) undertook an Audit of Quality Assurance at Nipissing University in 2014-15. The purpose was to assess the extent to which Nipissing University complies with its own Institutional Quality Assurance Processes (IQAP) and to affirm that institutional practices are consistent with the Quality Assurance Framework that governs quality assurance activities at publicly assisted Ontario Universities.

A team of three Quality Council auditors prepared a report based on audits of documents submitted by Nipissing University and a three-day site visit to the institution (March 25-27, 2015). Eight Recommendations were made, of which three were identified as Causes for Concern, and there were seven Suggestions. The Report on the Quality Assurance Audit of Nipissing University was approved by the Quality Council on February 17, 2016 and was sent to the University on February 25, 2016. In response to the Causes for Concern the Quality Council required that a subsequent desk audit be conducted following receipt of the outstanding Final Assessment Reports and Implementation Plans, as per the Quality Council's letter of February 25, 2016. This Desk Audit Report was sent to Nipissing University on July 29, 2016.

Under the Quality Assurance Framework, universities must satisfy audit recommendations, including those identified as Causes for Concern, as they identify institutional practices that are not compliant with the university's IQAP. Suggestions are proposed by the auditors in the spirit of encouraging reflection on how practice might be improved, however compliance is not mandatory.

THE AUDITORS' RESPONSE

Recommendation 1: Nipissing University must comply with its IQAP to follow the processes for appointment of internal and external reviewers for cyclical program reviews or change the IQAP.

Recommendation 2: (Cause for Concern) Nipissing University must prepare and post on its website the Institutional Executive Summary and Associated Implementation Plan for each cyclical program review.

Recommendation 3: (Cause for Concern) Nipissing University must prepare and send the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan for each cyclical program review to Senate and to the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance.

Recommendation 4: (Cause for Concern) Nipissing University must comply with its IQAP and implement the follow-up monitoring process identified in the IQAP for each program review.

Recommendation 5: Nipissing University must ensure that the external and internal reviewers appointed are at "arm's-length" from the program to be reviewed.

Recommendation 6: Nipissing University must ensure that the relevant officials (i.e.: Dean; Provost and Vice-President, Academic and Research) review and provide feedback to the program on self-studies created for cyclical program reviews to ensure that the self-study contains the information required in the IQAP.

Recommendation 7: Nipissing University must review its list of programs offered against its cyclical program review schedule to ensure the review schedule is up-to-date and that every program is scheduled for review at least once every eight years.

Recommendation 8: Nipissing University must ensure that there is formal documentation of the approval of relevant governance bodies including Faculty Council, Senate Committees and Senate for quality assurance processes that require these approvals.

CONCLUSION

After careful review of Nipissing University's Follow-Up One-Year Response, the auditors concluded that it is in general compliance with the recommendations in the Audit Report. Better monitoring of university IQAP processes from beginning to end has been achieved and the Auditors applaud the work that Nipissing has done to create templates (see Appendices A to L and Appendices 1 and 2) that will systematize the IQAP process at Nipissing. However, there remain a number of issues that are not fully resolved. In particular, in their second audit following submission of the Final Assessment Reports requested in Recommendations 2 and 3, the Auditors found numerous deficiencies and the Quality Council has requested a second one-year follow-up in response to the second audit.