

THE FIRST REVIEW OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK AND COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council), set up in July 2010, operates under the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) approved by the executive heads of Ontario universities and the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents. The Framework in section 6.2 mandates an independent review every eight years, and the first review will take place in over 2017-18 for implementation in July 2018.

1. The review will assess both the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) and its application by the Quality Council (QC), its committees, and the secretariat. The review will seek to answer such questions as the following:
 - a) The QAF and the QC were approved in 2010. To what extent has quality assurance, with the introduction of learning outcomes assessment and program monitoring, had a positive effect on the quality of academic programs and student experience?
 - b) Are the principles and practices of quality assurance underlying the 2010 Framework and Council still appropriate in the world of quality assurance today and into the next decade? What changes or revisions to the QAF would better support academic programs in their quest for high quality?
 - c) Are there particular areas of ambiguity, misunderstanding or disagreement that require attention?
 - d) Do the QC, the appraisal committee, and the audit committee perform their work efficiently and effectively, providing benefit to Ontario universities?
 - e) Are there recommended changes to their procedures?
 - f) Is the work of the QC and its committees adequately supported by the secretariat to provide the appropriate level of support to the universities?
2. The review will involve wide consultation across the Ontario university system, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, and other interested parties.
3. The criteria for assessment of quality assurance in Ontario universities will reflect international standards of exemplary quality assurance policy and practice.
4. The review panel will be composed of three external members, at least one of whom will have international experience in quality assurance. Canadian reviewers should have experience beyond Ontario.
5. The review will be overseen by a steering committee commissioned by OCAV and the Quality Council. The steering committee will receive the review and submit it, with comment and recommendations, to OCAV and the QC for their disposition.
6. The review will be conducted in confidence; the steering committee's recommendations and their final disposition by OCAV and the QC will be public.