

QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS AUDIT

ASSESSORS' REPORT WORKBOOK

INSTITUTION NAME: Capilano University

SITE VISIT DATES: January 10 & 11, 2022

SUBMISSION DATE: January 24, 2022

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The panel is requested to keep in mind the objectives and the guiding principles when undertaking the QAPA assessment.

Objectives

The main objectives of the quality assurance process audit (QAPA) are to ascertain that the institution:

- a) Continues to meet the program review policy requirements outlined in the DQAB's Exempt Status Criteria and Guidelines and the Degree Program Review Criteria and Guidelines, as applicable to the institution;
- b) Has and continues to meet appropriate program review processes and policies for all credential programs; and
- c) Applies its quality assurance process in relation to those requirements and responds to review findings appropriately.

Guiding Principles

- 1) Transparent and credible evidence of robust quality assurance criteria and processes are vital to BC public post-secondary institutions, the Degree Quality Assessment Board and the Ministry; demonstrate accountability; and contribute to the national and international reputation of the BC public post-secondary system.
- 2) Credible quality assurance should be rigorous and have peer evaluation as an essential feature.
- 3) QAPA standards will recognize the diversity and different mandates of BC public post secondary institutions.
- 4) Primary responsibility and accountability for educational program quality assurance rests with post-secondary institutions themselves.
- 5) QAPA will be carried out so as to maximize the opportunity to:
 - a. affirm, and add value to, the internal quality assurance processes at each institution; and
 - b. share best practices from other BC institutions and elsewhere.
- 6) QAPA will promote a collaborative and supportive process that benefits BC public post- secondary system.

Summary:

As context for the evaluation found in this workbook, the panel offers a broad overview of CapU. We hope that this overview will help to situate our assessment in the particular circumstances at the institution, since we know that for the QAPA process it is vital to consider the mission, mandate, history and culture of the organization whose quality assurance policies and practices are the focus of attention.

Originally a College, Capilano received status as a special purpose University in the University Act of 2008. It operates mainly from its campus in North Vancouver, with which about 85% of its students are connected, though it has four small satellite

campuses. In 2020-21 its student population was close to 6000 FTEs, with about 3500 in degree programs and about 2500 in programs leading to certificates, diplomas and other non-degree credentials. It houses five Faculties. In 2012, it became the first Canadian university to secure accreditation through the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and it has very recently been re-accredited for another seven years.

It is important to note that since 2019, the administrative structure of CapU now includes an office of Academic Initiatives and Planning (AIP), the locus for centralized quality assurance and for oversight of the institution's ways of implementing its policies and for the production of an impressive array of templates and schedules. Dr. Aurelea Mahood is the Director of this office, and she was the principal liaison with our panel before and during our site visit. We thank her for her prompt responses to our requests for information and clarifications. We underscore that the rapid development of quality assurance since 2019 occurred after the first cycle of program reviews at the institution had been completed.

This assessment is informed by the extensive material submitted for this review by Capilano University and by a comprehensive set of interviews the panel conducted during its virtual site visit with members of the University's community. (See the Agenda attached.) The material submitted included a Self Study (32 pp.) together with a considerable amount of appended information (236 pp.), several organizational charts, biographical sketches for each participant in the site visit, and evidence of CapU's practice of quality assurance drawn from four sample programs that had been selected in advance by DQAB's secretariat. The four sample programs the panel studied in order to ascertain the extent to which CapU was following its own policies and procedures came from a range of degrees and other programs offered by the institution. We had the opportunity to explore in some detail reviews of the program leading to a Bachelor of Music Therapy, the BA with a major in Liberal Studies, the BBA, and the Education Assistant Program. In each case, we received a Self Study, an external reviewers' report, the response to that report, and an action plan outlining the initiatives and undertakings that stemmed from the review. The submissions ranged in length from 367 pp. to 500 pp.

We wish to thank CapU for the effort it had invested in preparing material for our consideration. We were pleased with the professional layout of the material presented. We were also pleased with the thoughtful and frank dialogue that occurred during the site visit.

Commendations

Provide clear statements that articulate areas where the institution has shown exemplary practice in the field of program quality assurance and improvement.

The panel was impressed by the QA system that CapU has been able to develop in a short period of time. The level of maturity we found at CapU for such a relatively young degree-granting institution, is remarkable.

The panel would like to commend CapU's clear commitment to QA as demonstrated by the creation of the AIP office. It is obvious that the AIP office has played a crucial role in allowing CapU to develop exemplary QA practices in just a few years. We would like to highlight some of the areas of QA practices where we found that CapU was exemplary:

1. The development of templates and guidelines are key parts of a QA system and the AIP has undoubtedly supported the QA process at CapU by providing an array of templates and guidelines that have supported the program development and review processes.
2. The panel found also that the onboarding of a cohort of several program review teams simultaneously is a good idea as it creates a community of practice, and is particularly relevant as those processes are new for the institution.
3. The idea of integrating an internal/external reviewer in the review panel follows best practices by supporting colleagues to learn how the QA process works. In fact, the QAPA review process follows the same principle.
4. Incorporate input from other academic units during the development of new programs is a strength of the program-development process.
5. We found that data gathering and analytics have evolved from the time of the first reviews we examined in comparison to the last ones. Allowing departments to view data on a regular basis, both for review of programs and for program development, is a noteworthy advance that will support QA overall.
6. CapU has strongly integrated Senate in the QA process. In particular, the fact that Senate and SAPPRC (Senate Academic Planning and Program Review Committee) approve concept papers for stage1 program proposals is an excellent idea that reinforces the bicameral system and encourages the Senate to be fully engaged in the institution's success. To us, CapU is a leader in this regard.
7. Finally, the panel found that there was a strong sense of collegiality, mutual trust, and collaboration at all levels of the university. The panel is convinced that this cohesiveness should pave the way for the creation and evolution of a QA culture at CapU. It was also clear to the panel that integrated planning will benefit from the QA work that has been developed at the institution.

Affirmations

Provide clear statements in the areas where the institution has identified a weakness and has articulated how it intends to correct it. In effect, this is affirming the institution's judgment and findings in its Institution Report.

The panel was impressed with the level of critical self-reflection in CapU's Self Study and throughout the site visit interviews. Specifically, we would like to affirm and support the following identified areas of weakness by CapU and their plans to address them:

1. Given the recent approvals of CapU's *Envisioning 2030* and *Illuminating 2030* (institutional and academic plans, respectively), CapU has made a commitment to aligning their self-studies for new programs and program reviews with these key strategic documents. We encourage CapU to continue to evolve and align their program development and program reviews with the vision, values and goals identified in their strategic plans.
2. CapU acknowledged the need to improve their communication strategies for sharing program action plans with the broader CapU community. Possible avenues to support this area include engaging Senate more fully in reviewing and discussing the action plans, the possibility of more regular updates (perhaps biennially) from Departments and Deans on progress made in implementing action items, and sharing reviews and recommendations with key support areas of the University with the expectation that they would be involved in helping to implement recommendations and action plans.
3. The panel appreciated CapU's acknowledgement of the need for more student engagement in program reviews and encourages the university to continue to explore ways of capturing student voices throughout the quality assurance review process.
4. CapU's commitment to Indigenization and decolonization is evident throughout the *Envisioning 2030* and *Illuminating 2030* documents and it was also prioritized in the introductory comments by the President and Provost during the site visit. A desire to engage with local Indigenous leaders such as Elders, Indigenous scholars, and the Indigenous Learners Librarian to examine the process and ways of information-gathering and understanding within program review demonstrates CapU's ongoing commitment to Indigenization and decolonization. The panel strongly endorses these and similar initiatives.
5. CapU has identified in the Self Study a desire to pursue graduate -level education and to put in place the appropriate program development processes to support this goal. The panel emphasizes the importance of embedding into the processes the strategic directions described in *Illuminate 2030* to ensure alignment with CapU's ambitions.
6. CapU's Self Study identified additional resources to assist in program development such as the publication of an Academic Credentials companion guide and a resolve to strengthen synergies between AIP and Institutional Research. These moves would assist in informed decision-making. The panel supports the addition of these types of resources that will improve the program development process. Particularly important is the need to address and articulate resource allocation in new program development.
7. Although not addressed in the Self Study, discussion surrounding program approvals for micro-credentials is ongoing. CapU staff identified the ongoing need to find the right balance between the readiness to respond rapidly to educational programming to address local emerging issues and the time it takes to ensure that any new credential meets the rigorous quality assurance standards. This is important work, and we encourage CapU to continue to work towards finding the right balance. This venture will be particularly vital in post-pandemic recovery efforts and in contributing to the new economy.

Recommendations

Provide clear statements in areas needing improvement. Recommendations may also be made in relation to areas of concern identified by the institution for which no plan of action has been articulated by the institution.

1. When reviewing the two main QA policy documents (B.106 and B.106.2), CapU should bear in mind the need to ensure that the one-size-fits-model now in place is suitably adjusted to allow for flexibility and the needs of credentials and programs of different sizes and scope.
2. When considering the documents required for quality assurance, CapU should determine how best to balance the need for privacy and candour, on the one hand, and the need for public accountability on the other.
3. In the aftermath to program reviews, CapU should institute progress reports to Senate not only in year 1, but also in years 3 and 5, assuming that it will be relying on a 7-year interval between cycles.
4. CapU should consider constituting external review teams with three rather than two senior academics.
5. We encourage CapU to gather input relevant to the quality of programs and their graduates from Program Advisory Committees.
6. CapU should consider how to support smaller programs in recognition of their reduced capacity and the burden on them of preparing QA materials.
7. CapU should update templates and guidelines to ensure they are aligned with the institutional and academic plans.
8. We encourage CapU to create an action plan, with milestones, for pacing of and prioritizing the changes and improvements it intends to pursue.
9. We encourage CapU to include consultation with all administrative units during the program development process to facilitate integrated planning.

Signed:

Chair of the QAPA Team:



January 24, 2022

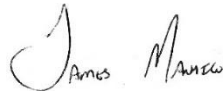
Dr. Ronald Bond

QAPA Assessors:



January 24, 2022

Dr. Patricia Lasserre



January 24, 2022

Dr. James Mandigo

4.1. Overall Process

A. Does the process reflect the institution's mandate, mission, and values?	
CRITERIA:	COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS:
<p>(i) The institution should be able to demonstrate that it has an established institutional and program review planning cycle and process to assess the effectiveness of its educational programs and services, their responsiveness to student, labour market, and social needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of the AIP Office has ensured the availability of dedicated human resources to oversee quality assurance processes that align with relevant Board and Senate policies. It is a critical part of the QA infrastructure at CapU. • Adherence to Board Policy B.106: <i>Program and Course Review and Approval</i> is the responsibility of the VP Academic: it directs the University to conduct “periodic formal review of existing programs to ensure alignment with the University’s values, priorities, and goals, and with the requirements of the Ministry.” • All credentialed programs are reviewed every five to seven years. • As outlined in Policy B.106, the program review processes seek: “input from all stakeholders, including faculty, staff, administrators, current students, former students, community members, business/industry representatives, and prospective employers”. • The updated <i>Program Review Reference Guide</i> (Feb, 2021) outlines a series of key internal and external stakeholders who are involved in the consultation process • The panel is satisfied CapU meets this requirement.
<p>(ii) The process should contribute to the continuous improvement of the institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous improvement is the <i>raison d’être</i> for CapU’s commitment to quality assurance and the processes it has adopted.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As outlined in Policy B.106, the goal of program review is to: “highlight opportunities for improvement and growth, recommend changes where appropriate, and indicate pathways for future directions” • The updated <i>Program Review Reference Guide</i> (Feb, 2021) outlines a rigorous 6-Phase process used to ensure continuous program improvements are made • It is the panel’s understanding that CapU is updating the Action Plan to align with its new institutional and academic plans. This effort will help to ensure that the implementation of recommendations from the program review process corroborate goals and tactics in these foundational strategic plans. • In the spirit of continuous improvement, we would encourage CapU to rely on the external reviewers to identify areas of improvement. Many of the exemplars we studied contained recommendations first found in the program Self Study that were subsequently “endorsed” by the reviewers. While it is important for programs to consider areas of improvement as a healthy form of critical reflection, external examiners should be invited to bring forward their own independent recommendations. External reviews should facilitate formative as well as summative feedback.
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<i>B. Is the scope of the process appropriate?</i>	
CRITERIA:	COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS:
(i) There should be evidence of a formal, institutionally approved policy and procedure for the periodic review of programs against published standards that includes the following characteristics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CapU demonstrates that it has a quality assurance planning cycle that rests on a Board-approved foundational policy (B.106-01) and a complementary set of procedures (B.106.02.) These were

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Self Study undertaken by faculty members and administrators of the program based on evidence relating to program performance, including strengths and weaknesses, desired improvements, and future directions. A Self Study takes into account: • the continuing appropriateness of the program’s structure, admissions requirements, method of delivery and curriculum for the program’s educational goals and standards; • the adequacy and effective use of resources (physical, technological, financial and human); • faculty performance including the quality of teaching and supervision and demonstrable currency in the field of specialization; • that the learning outcomes achieved by students/graduates meet the program’s stated goals, the credential level standard, and where appropriate, the standards of any related regulatory, accrediting or professional association; • the continuing adequacy of the methods used for evaluating student progress and achievement to ensure that the program’s stated goals have been achieved; • the graduate satisfaction level, student satisfaction level, and graduation rate; and • where appropriate, the graduate employment rates, employer satisfaction level, and advisory board satisfaction level. <p>➤ An assessment conducted by a panel that includes independent experts external to the institution. The assessment should normally include a site visit, a written report that assesses program quality and may recommend quality improvements; and an institution response to the report;</p>	<p>adopted in 2015 and 2017, respectively. The former was amended in fall 2021 in order to expand the program review cycle from every five years to every five-to-seven years. Consistent with its mandate and mission, CapU prides itself on graduating job-ready students who will be able to enter the work force and to contribute to the region both socially and economically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The requirements for a Self Study are delineated clearly and fully. There are six sections to the template, which is designed to provide “a systematic, university-supported, evidence-based opportunity to reflect on the strengths and weakness of a unit’s academic program(s), with the objective of identifying potential opportunities for renewal and reimagining in alignment with . . . “approved strategic and academic priorities.” The six modules provide information on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Background</i> (program description and aims); ○ <i>Curriculum Design</i> (including learning outcomes) ○ <i>Student Journey</i> (including student success and learner satisfaction ○ <i>Community Connections and Commitment</i> ○ <i>Foundational Resources</i> (including subject expertise, operating budgets, and research and scholarly activity) ○ <i>Outcomes</i> • Increasingly, data furnished by Institutional Research informs the reflective and introspective processes generated by this 6-part Self Study, that used a format common to all programs.
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<p>➤ A summary of the conclusions of the evaluation that is made appropriately available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The external assessment called for by QAPA is a key component of CapU’s process and normally includes a site visit (now virtual), a report containing appraisal and recommendations, and a response from the program and its dean that outlines the actions precipitated by the exercise. • As noted earlier, we suggest that the external assessment be conducted by a team of 3 rather than 2 experts from outside. We also invite CapU to consider on each occasion the independence of reviewers to ensure that the process is devoid of perceived conflict of interest. • We offered a recommendation earlier in our report suggesting that CapU adopt a system that summarizes the conclusions of each evaluation and makes them publicly available on an institutional website. Hints on how to do this well appear in the advice provided to universities in Ontario: https://oucqa.ca/guide/final-assessment-reports-implementation-plans-and-the-executive-summary-section-5-3-2/
<p>(ii) The institution can demonstrate that it has a policy and process for new program approval that includes peer / external review by appropriate experts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CapU’s policy B.106-02 (approved in 2017) covers new program approval processes. • The procedures for new program approvals include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A formal development of a working group to develop both a concept paper and the full proposal ○ A formal process to request support for preliminary comparator scans and labour market analysis ○ An assessment framework for an 8-part concept paper that includes alignment with institutional goals as well as student demand and market analyses. The concept paper is reviewed and approved by

	<p>Senate prior to engaging in the stage 1 and stage 2 applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A template for stage 1 and stage 2 application ○ Evidence of consultation with the library. ○ A timeline document to understand the program development flow. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The institution applies for stage 1 first and independently from the stage 2 proposal. In both instances, internal and external reviews are required. ● As we reviewed all the documents, we did not see clearly whether all administrative units are consulted when developing new programs. For example, it is unclear if IT and facilities are included in the consultation process for new program development. However, as CapU grows its offerings, it might become more important to plan for space or equipment at the development stage (vs. implementation stage).
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C. Are the guidelines differentiated and adaptable to respond to the needs and contexts of different units, e.g. faculties or departments or credential level?

CRITERIA:	COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS:
(i) Are the guidelines adaptable to the range of programs and offerings within the institution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The guidelines for program development do provide different templates and workflows based on the type of programs being developed ● The guidelines and templates for program reviews are well defined. Currently the same templates are used, however, regardless of the size of the program. ● As noted earlier, the panel believes that CapU should reconsider the one-size-fits-all model and should suitably adjust it to allow for flexibility and the needs of

	<p>credentials and program of different size and scope. In particular, CapU should consider how to support smaller programs in recognition of their capacity and the burden on them of preparing QA materials.</p>
<p>(ii) Do the guidelines provide measurable, consistent means and direction to undertake diversified program review?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any new program proposal, regardless of the type of program, must develop a concept paper that must be approved by Senate. This requirement ensures a consistent means to evaluate the value of the proposed program to the institution. • Program reviews use the same template regardless of the program being reviewed. CapU is currently evolving its strategy and is now combining or coordinating the evaluation of programs that have some commonalities (e.g. a degree and the diploma laddering into it. • As mentioned above, CapU should consider how to support smaller programs that might find the process overwhelming.
<p>(iii) Are the guidelines consistent with institutional Mandate, mission, vision and associated strategic goals?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidelines and templates for program development and program review require justification of how the program (new or reviewed) meets the mandate, mission and vision of the institution and its strategic goals, encapsulated in <i>Envisioning 2030</i> and <i>Illuminating 2030</i>.

D. Does the process promote quality improvement?	
CRITERIA:	COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS:
<p>(i) The institution should be able to demonstrate that it has appropriate accountability mechanisms functioning for vocational, professional and academic programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the site visit, the panel confirmed that the processes used for quality assurance are similar for all credentials (i.e., certificates, diplomas, degrees) at CapU

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the vast differences in sizes of programs and their purpose, it may be appropriate to consider tailored processes for different types of credentials. • For example, many of the diploma programs have faculty who have very large teaching responsibilities and are unable to take time away from their classes to focus on the rigorous processes for program review. This can put considerable strain on these smaller programs and lessen the impact and priority given to program review • CapU has also made a concerted effort to align the timing of cyclical reviews with appraisals done for external accreditation from professional organizations. This effort was received very positively by those interviewed during the virtual site visit • To support ongoing accountability and continuous improvement, the panel earlier recommended that there be at a minimum biennial progress reports between cyclical reviews.
<p>(ii) The institution should be able to demonstrate how faculty scholarship and professional development inform teaching (including graduate teaching) and continue to be a foundation for ensuring that programming is up to date.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 5 of the program review Self Study “invites program review teams to assess their faculty’s subject matter expertise, professional activities, creative activity, research, scholarship, and teaching expertise and development.” • All members of the department are asked to submit a current CV as part of the review process • The 4 program exemplars revealed clearly that the review process is capable of addressing this criterion across a diverse set of program areas and credentials.
<p>(iii) The institution should be able to demonstrate how learning outcomes are</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sections 1 (Background), 2 (Program and Curriculum Design), and 3 (Student

<p>being achieved and how student progress is assessed and measured.</p>	<p>Journey) within the Self Study all contribute to a program’s ability to reflect upon the learning outcomes expected , how the attainment of those outcomes is to be demonstrated, and how student progress is assessed and measured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven institutional learning outcomes were approved by the Board in 2013. • Within the AIP office, there is an Assessment Analyst who supports the effort to “establish meaningful, measurable and manageable program learning outcomes” that align with the institutional learning outcomes. • Each of the program exemplars furnished comments on how programs aligned with institutional learning outcomes. In particular, course syllabi for each course specifically identify how learning outcomes are being assessed and measured. • In addition, the Centre for Teaching Excellence assists in each program review by collaborating with the unit to develop a curriculum map that exhibits learning outcomes across courses within programs.
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4.2. Review findings

<i>A. Were the responses to the sample program review findings adequate?</i>	
CRITERIA:	COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS:
<p>The institution has a follow up process for internal program reviews and acts in accordance with it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CapU’s follow-up procedures are outlined in its policy and procedures documents. An action plan must respond to the external reviewers’ recommendations. Currently, the routine calls for a progress report to its Senate committee after 12 months have elapsed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As suggested in our recommendations, the follow-up process could be improved by mandating progress reports through SAPPRC to Senate in years 3 and 5, as well as 1.
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B. Does the process inform future decision making?	
CRITERIA:	COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS:
<p>The program review ensures that the program remains consistent with the institution's current mission, goals and long-range plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As indicated earlier, the guidelines and templates for program reviews require justification of how the program meets the mandate, mission and vision of the institution and its strategic goals. Specifically, the template Self Study document requests in several sections to link the response to various areas/actions of the <i>Envisioning 2030</i> document. Additionally, the template for the reviewers' report has a section dedicated to the alignment of the program with institutional goals.

C. Are the review findings appropriately disseminated?	
CRITERIA:	COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS:
<p>The institution has a well-defined system to disseminate the review findings to the appropriate entities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CapU does distribute review findings fairly widely, particularly among members of the administration and to the Senate and its SAPPRC. As noted in its own evaluation of its current processes, however, CapU recognizes that "there is an important opportunity to improve how review findings, recommendations and action plans are shared with the wider university community, including academic support units."