PROCEDURE

Procedure Number: AOP 219	Procedure Title: Program Quality Assurance
Supersedes Existing Policy? N	Procedure Owner: Senior Vice-President Academic
Associated Policy: Y	Date Last Approved by CET: June 2018

1   Purpose

One of the requisites for colleges in the Ontario system to govern their own programs, was the implementation of a quality assurance process. The Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002, outlines two elements of this expectation:

- Quality assurance at the individual college level; and,
- A self-regulating process at the system level.

Program review contributes to quality by forming a major part of compliance by providing quality assurance at the college level, and is therefore essential to College operations.

2   Application

This policy applies to all programs leading to an Ontario College credential (certificate, diploma, advanced diploma, graduate certificate).

3   Program Quality Assurance Process

3.1   This is to be a reflective, evidence-based process that supports our ongoing institutional focus on student learning, student success and program sustainability. Time and financial support is required and participation in this process will be recognized. This is a sustainable process of continual quality improvement across our academic programs and services. This process creates evidence that is owned by the individual Schools and program teams. The evidence respects the program team's understanding of their program and disciplines. It includes a broad range of stake holder opinion – including, but not limited to, analysis of KPI data, focus groups, etc. – and that leads to clear recommendations on how the Schools and teams can improve their programs.

3.2   The quality standards for this process are based on the six OCQAS standards with the addition of two standards around sustainability and accessibility in support of Loyalist College's strategic plan. The work of the Schools and program teams must be undertaken in the context of the eight quality standards "defining exemplary college program quality assurance processes":

Quality Standard 1: Effective quality assurance mechanisms ensure the quality of a program management system and demonstrate continuous improvement.

Quality Standard 2: Effective quality assurance mechanisms ensure the quality of the programs of study being developed and demonstrate continuous improvement.

Quality Standard 3: Effective quality assurance mechanisms ensure the conformity of programs of study with relevant government requirements and demonstrate continuous improvement.

Quality Standard 4: Effective quality assurance mechanisms ensure the quality of program delivery and student assessment, and demonstrate continuous improvement.

Quality Standard 5: Effective quality assurance mechanisms ensure the communication and monitoring of established academic policies and practices related to academic issues that support program implementation and delivery, and student achievement of vocational learning outcomes, and demonstrate continuous improvement.

Quality Standard 6: Effective quality assurance mechanisms ensure the existence, availability and allocation of resources (human, physical, financial) and technological infrastructure to support student achievement of program vocational learning outcomes, and demonstrate continuous improvement.

Quality Standard 7: Quality assurance processes ensure the activities and procedures of the program support Loyalist's mission and vision of sustainability; and more specifically, Loyalist's pillars of sustainability.

Quality Standard 8: Quality assurance processes ensure the activities and procedures of the program support the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA); and more specifically, Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

3.3 Schools and program teams will prepare electronic "portfolios" of evidence in support of their quality assurance work using the College's learning management system (LMS), which will become an ongoing repository for their documentation of processes.

3.4 Each year, all programs are expected to engage in quality assurance reflection and activity. Every five years, based on an established schedule, selected program teams will present the progress they have made in program quality assurance processes. Under the guidance of the Program Quality Assurance Committee, the program teams will reflect on each of the eight criteria and provide answers to the following questions:

1. **What are our processes?**
2. **What is the evidence from our processes?**
3. **What improvements can we make to our programs, processes, and learning environment based on the analysis of this evidence?**

3.5 It is anticipated that, as reflective practices and quality assurance activities are to be ongoing within the Schools, the preparation of this report will not be onerous either in terms of time or financial commitment, with presentations to the Program Quality Assurance Committee occurring during the May/June period.

3.6 The **Program Quality Assurance Committee** (under the auspice of the Office of the Vice-President Academic) comprised of the Chair, a Dean, up to four faculty members representing each academic area of the College, and a representative from the Continuing Education department, will receive and review the program team reports and portfolios as per the established schedule. Most importantly, the Committee will provide timely, <u>formative</u> feedback on the program's quality assurance processes based on established benchmarks. Program teams will have an opportunity to respond to the Committee's feedback and meet with the Committee for a debrief discussion to clarify any recommendations made.

3.7 If the Dean on the Committee is the Dean for a program scheduled for presentation, an alternate Dean will participate in the presentation as a committee member. Faculty members may recuse themselves of their committee duties pertaining to their program when their team is scheduled to present. Committee membership will be a three-year term to build capacity and ensure the College has a solid base of quality assurance practitioners.

3.8 If a program team exhibits significant gaps in their quality process reporting, they will be asked to re-present to the Committee at a time determined by the Program Quality Assurance Committee, the Dean and the program team. The timelines given will be dependent upon the magnitude of work and professional development that is required.

3.9 If specific items are omitted from a program team's presentation, but they demonstrate a generally acceptable report of their program quality processes, they will be asked to submit the missing elements to the Committee for review at a time determined by the Program Quality Assurance Committee, Dean and the program team.

3.10 Program teams who have demonstrated acceptable or better quality processes will be asked to present an annual form summarizing their ongoing program quality management work until the next formal presentation.

3.11 On an annual basis, the Committee will produce a summary report of the College's program quality activities for the College Executive Team. The Committee will also oversee the production of the documentation and validation required by OCQAS.

4   Related Documents or Links

- AOP 221: Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
- AOP 204: Course Outlines

6. References

Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002