Algoma UNIVERSITY

Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP)

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Preamble

Algoma University aspires to provide academic programs within an exceptional learning environment and prepares graduates for further study, employment, and community engagement. The objective of the university is the pursuit of learning through scholarship, teaching, and research within a spirit of free inquiry and expression. As stated in Bill 80, Algoma University's special mission is to:

a) Be a teaching-oriented university that provides programs in liberal arts and sciences and professional programs, primarily at the undergraduate level, with a particular focus on the needs of northern Ontario; and

b) Cultivate cross-cultural learning between Aboriginal communities and other communities, in keeping with the history of Algoma University College and its geographic site.

All quality assurance processes will be guided by Algoma University's Special Mission, Academic and Strategic Plans, and its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Charter.

Purpose and Scope of Policy

Algoma University's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) provides a framework for quality assurance processes that are consistent with the mission of the university and its expression of the university's degree-level expectations. This framework demonstrates Algoma University's commitment to maintaining high quality academic standards and to developing and refining quality assurance processes that result in continuous program improvements. Algoma University is committed to the quality assurance principles for Ontario Universities and the Quality Council. Consequently, Algoma's IQAP aligns the university's quality assurance policies and procedures with the *Quality Assurance Framework* (QAF) of the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the "Quality Council").

This policy and its procedures are subject to ratification by the Algoma University Senate and the Quality Council, both initially and following each revision. The processes described herein are subject to regular audit by the Quality Council (except those related to microcredentials, undergraduate and graduate diplomas and certificates). The IQAP applies to all of the following for-credit academic programming:

i. All proposed and existing undergraduate and graduate programs as well as proposed and existing specializations and minors within such programs as established by the University's Senate and listed upon the Senate's approval in the Academic Calendar;

ii. All proposed and existing for-credit micro-credentials established by the University's Senate and listed in the Academic Calendar following the Senate's approval;

iii. All proposed and existing for-credit undergraduate and graduate-level diplomas and certificates as proposed to, or established by, the University's Senate and listed in the Academic Calendar following the Senate's approval; and

iv.   All undergraduate and graduate inter-institutional programs, including dual credential and/or joint degree programs, as proposed to or established by the University's Senate and listed in the Academic Calendar following the Senate's approval.

Quality assurance for non-credit programs, certificates, and microcredentials is under the purview of Algoma University's Office of Professional and Continuing Education.

The IQAP consists of four distinct sections, as outlined below:

1. Guidelines for New Program Approvals
2. Guidelines for Major Modifications (Program Renewal and Significant Change)
3. Guidelines for Cyclical Program Reviews
4. Guidelines for Institutional Audits

Each section describes in detail the policies and procedures to be followed.

Any revision to the university's IQAP is subject to approval by the Quality Council. The Quality Council will use the IQAP as a benchmark to determine Algoma University's compliance with its own quality assurance processes through an 8-year audit cycle.

Learning Outcomes and Degree Level Expectations

The threshold framework for degree expectations are the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) Guidelines for Degree Level Expectations (attached as Appendix A). Following a period of consultation, the Algoma University Senate adopted the OCAV Degree Level Expectations as its institutional framework for quality assurance on November 5, 2010. The OCAV framework for degree expectations supports academic departments in planning and/or revising curricula and in communicating program-level learning outcomes to current and prospective students. In light of Algoma University's Special Mission, all academic units are encouraged to consider adding Indigenous learning outcomes, adopted from the Negahneewin Research Centre at Confederation College (Appendix D) when designing a new program or making a major modification to an existing one.

University Authorities

Chief Academic Officer

The authority responsible for the IQAP, its administration and application, is Algoma University's Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The Chief Academic Officer may delegate operational responsibility for the administration and application of the IQAP to another academic or administrative officer (the "designate").

The CAO or designate is Algoma University's authoritative contact with Ontario's Quality Council for new program approvals, cyclical reviews, expedited approvals, and major modifications.

The CAO or designate is a member of the Algoma University Quality Assurance Committee (QualCom), a committee of the Algoma University Senate that oversees the application of the IQAP to new and existing programs. The committee reports regularly to the Senate.

The CAO or designate has the authority to advise the Senate Committees to defer or not approve any program revisions put forward by departments who are behind schedule by more than 3 months at any stage of the Cyclical Program Review that falls within their purview.

Senate Committees

The following committees have a role in the quality assurance process [SENATE COMMITTEES]:

The Algoma University Senate

The Senate is responsible for approving the Algoma University Institutional Quality Assurance Policy and any subsequent revisions. The Senate is also responsible for approving any new programs for academic credit, and modifications to existing programs for academic credit.

Quality Assurance Committee (QualCom)

QualCom, a standing committee of the Senate, is responsible for coordinating, monitoring, implementing all aspects of, and carrying out revisions to, the IQAP including deciding on the review cycle. The Committee oversees, monitors, and reports to the Senate on all aspects of program reviews for new and existing programs for academic credit, and assumes responsibility for ensuring programs are appropriately designed and structured to achieve their program learning objectives and outcomes. QualCom monitors progress on the Implementation Plans in Final Assessment Reports. The committee is also responsible for all aspects of major modifications to existing programs for academic credit prior to their approval by the Senate.

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (AppCom)

AppCom, a standing committee of the Senate, conducts ongoing internal/external reviews of the academic programs for credit of the University. It also reviews and recommends approval to the Senate of new for-credit academic program proposals. While the Committee reviews and recommends to the Senate all academic programming and quality assurance matters put forward by the Quality Assurance Committee. Its main function is tied to regularly reviewing existing academic programming at the level of the whole University, advising on funding levels of academic activities and making new faculty hiring recommendations. In addition, AppCom prioritizes recommendations for Implementation Plans and approves Final Assessment Reports.

Curriculum Committee (CurCom)

CurCom, a standing committee of the Senate is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations to the Senate on proposed new courses and minor modifications to courses and programs for academic credit.

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1.0 Guidelines for New Program Approvals and Expedited Approvals

1.1 Scope

The new program approvals protocol applies to all new for-credit degree programs. A new program is any degree program which has not been previously approved for Algoma University by the Quality Council, Ministerial consent, or any intra-institutional approval process that has previously been applied. A new program is 'brand-new': that is to say, the program has substantially different learning outcomes from those of any existing approved programs offered by Algoma University (e.g., a new honours program where a major with the same designation already exists). In developing a new joint program and other inter-institutional programs, Algoma University will follow its own IQAP while partner institutions will follow their own QA processes. In the event of any ambiguity or uncertainty, Algoma University's IQAP will be considered the determining process. Proposals for the introduction or modification to an undergraduate or graduate certificate only require reference to the Quality Council if they are part of a New Program.

1.2 Evaluative Criteria for new degree programs and major modifications

In the province of Ontario, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) has developed a set of evaluative criteria for the review of all "non-core" undergraduate and graduate programs. The principal criteria are attested to by the President of the institution and evaluated by the Ministry for new program proposals to align program funding approvals with the Differentiation Policy Framework and Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs). The evaluative criteria of Algoma University's IQAP are guided by the MCU criteria for evaluation.

New programs and major modifications to programs are evaluated against the criteria listed in Appendix B.

1.3 Quick reference of level of approval required for new programs and major changes to existing programs

Program Type	QualCom	AppCom	Senate	External Reviewers	Quality Council
New degree	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Major modification to existing program	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No (but reporting required)
Certificate in an existing program	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
New inter-institutional degree	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New specialization in existing program	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No (but notification required)
Microcredential [for-credit]	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

1.4 Steps in New Program Approval Process

Step	Description	Approvals
Step 1	Conceptual Stage and formation of Program Development Team	Department or CAO (or designate)
Step 2	New program concept summary template completed	1. Department(s) 2. Faculty(ies) 3. AppCom
Step 3	New Program Proposal template completed ● Section One: New Program Proposal template ● Section Two: List of Proposed External Reviewers ● Section Three: Supplementary Appendices	1. Department(s) 2. Faculty(ies) 3. CurCom (new courses only) 4. QualCom
Step 4	Ranking and Selection of External Reviewers ● QualCom selects 2 external reviewers	QualCom
Step 5	Site Visit (or Desk Review) and instructions	Office of CAO
Step 6	External Review (Reviewers' Report) ● External Reviewer submit Reviewers' Report ● CAO or designate approves and forwards report to Department Chair(s), and/or Directors(s) and Faulty Chair(s)	CAO or designate
Step 7	Internal Response ● Internal response by group proposing the program ● Internal response by CAO or designate	Office of the CAO and Department
Step 8	Institutional approval ● AppCom reviews the New Program Proposal, Reviewers' Report, working group response, and CAO or designate's response and makes recommendation to the Senate	1. AppCom (QualCom can assist) 2. Senate
Step 9	Submission for approval by Quality Council	CAO or designate
Step 10	Announcement of new program	CAO or designate
Step 11	Decision of Quality Council	none

Step 12	Program Implementation	Department
Step 13	Monitor new program	CAO or designate and QualCom

1.5 Process

Step 1: Conceptual Stage and Formation of Program Development Team

Algoma University encourages the development of new academic programs that are responsive to regional needs and contribute to provincial and regional capacity. The process to initiate, develop, review, and approve new academic programs is sufficiently flexible to gather input and suggestions from a variety of sources. All new program initiatives will align with the Algoma University Strategic Plan and the Algoma University Academic Plan.
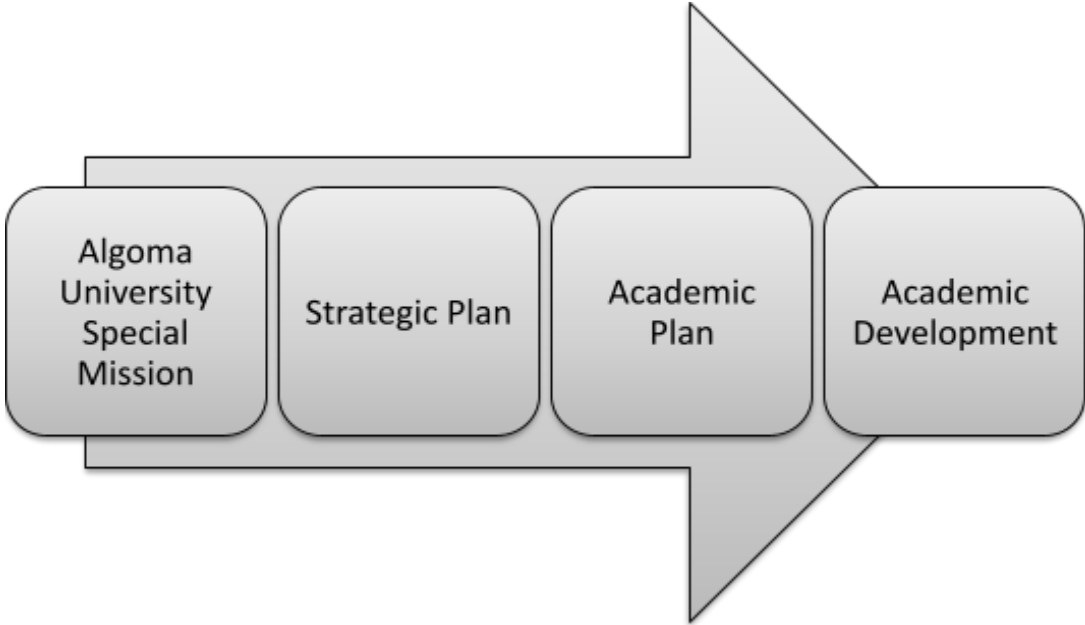
Ideas for new program development may be introduced for many reasons, including:
- Response to recognized student demand
- Response to new and changing government priorities
- Response to regional need for a program
- Support of vision and strategic objectives of the university
- Response to educational needs of Anishinaabe communities
- Support of growth in quality and excellence
- Enhancement of program offerings for current and future students
- Response to inter-faculty and inter-institutional initiatives
- Support of four strategic directions for research as set out in the University's Strategic Plan for Research
- Revenue generation

Suggestions for new program proposals can come forward from a variety of sources, including:

- Individual faculty members
- Departments or Faculties
- Administration
- Board members
- Students
- Staff
- Community members
- Partners

Suggestions from individual faculty members must receive support from the Department, School or Faculty before proceeding through the approvals process. If the initiative does not receive this support, the faculty member(s) may take the idea to the CAO or designate, who may work with the appropriate Chairs to try and establish a level of support. The CAO or designate provides a preliminary assessment of how closely the suggestion meets the objectives of the Strategic Plan and the Academic Plan when deciding on the extent to which they will try and garner support. If the CAO or designate is not able to establish any level of support from the appropriate Department or Faculty, the suggestion will not proceed further.

Suggestions from administration, Board members, staff, partners, or current students will be brought to the attention of the CAO or designate. The CAO or designate will raise the idea with the appropriate Faculty or Department Chair. If agreed, the Faculty or Department Chair will work within their respective area to establish the level of support and identify a core group of faculty to develop the suggestion further. If a group of current faculty cannot be identified, the idea will not proceed further, with the exception of situations where the proposed program is in a discipline or field where the university has no existing faculty expertise. In this situation, the CAO or designate can constitute a program development team to move the suggestion forward.

Step 2: New Program Concept Summary

The new program concept summary provides a framework and mechanism for determining priorities for program development. The summary provides a filter that the University Senate can consider the merits of program proposals and associated resource requests.

Process:

a) The faculty member or program development team leader prepares a new program concept summary using the appropriate template that briefly summarizes the suggestion and resource implications of developing the idea further). A new program concept summary must be completed before the program proceeds to the next stage.

b) The concept summary is presented to the Department and then to the Faculty. Program proposals for which there is no existing department require endorsement by the Faculty in which the proposed program would reside, before being sent to AppCom for consideration.

For multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs, the summary requires endorsement by all involved Departments and Faculties.

c) Once endorsed by the Faculty, the concept summary moves on to Academic Planning and Priorities (AppCom) for consideration. AppCom approval is required to move the new program to the next stage of the process. In the case where the proposed program is in an area for which there is no existing department, the concept summary is presented by the program development team to the Faculty in which the program would be most likely to reside.

The decision of AppCom to support **new program development** is informed by the following principles (not presented in order of importance).

- Does the new program idea align with the vision, Special Mission, Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) and Strategic Plan of the university?
- Does the new program idea align with the academic foundations and themes of the Academic Plan?
- Does the new program concept have broad-based support within the Department, School, university, and/or community?
- Is there evidence with respect to student demand and/or societal need for the program?
- Is there evidence to support the financial viability of the program? Are there sufficient financial, human, and infrastructure (e.g., space) resources available to initiate and support the program, either within existing budgets or based on revenue that the proposed program is expected to generate?

If approved by AppCom, the Program Development Team can move on to the New Program Proposal Stage.

Step 3: New Program Proposal

Process:

a) At this step, a full new program proposal is prepared. The new program proposal is a detailed outline of all program components, including any specializations and/or streams that are being proposed. The new program proposal addresses each of the evaluative criteria listed in Appendix B. Foundational to the new program proposal is the development and establishment of learning outcomes for the proposed program. Advice and support in developing these learning outcomes can be sought from the Office of the Chief Academic Officer or from QualCom members. In light of Algoma University's Special Mission, all academic units are encouraged to consider adding Indigenous learning outcomes, adopted from the Negahneewin Research Centre at Confederation College (Appendix D) when designing a new program.

b) The Chair of the Program Development Team will submit the New Program Proposal to the Faculty Chair in the three separate sections outlined below. Assistance in organizing and formatting of the Self-Study is provided by the Office of the CAO. Final copies of all documents will be archived by the Office of the CAO in PDF format.

Section One: [New Program Proposal Template](#)
Section Two: List of Proposed External Reviewers

> ***Number of nominations:*** The Department or program development team will submit a list of external reviewers to QualCom. The list must include a minimum of eight nominations.
>
> - ***Qualifications of External Reviewers:*** Normally, external reviewers are associate or full professors, or the equivalent, with disciplinary experience, qualifications and program management experience, including an appreciation of pedagogy and learning outcomes. A demonstrated experience assisting programs in incorporating employability objectives into curriculum design is desirable.
> - Nomination will include the following information:
>   - Name, Rank, Position, Institution
>   - Contact information (current telephone number and email address)
>   - Degrees - designation, university, discipline, etc.
>   - Area of research expertise
>   - Previous affiliation with Algoma University (if any), and association with individual members of faculty, e.g. student/professor, co-author, close personal friend
> - ***Arm's Length Requirement:*** External reviewers must be at arm's length from the program under review. Preference is given to external reviewers who have worked in institutions that are similar in size and character to Algoma University. [The Conflict of Interest Policy for External Program Review Consultants](#) must be followed during the assignment of external reviewers.

> **Section Three:** Supplementary Appendices. These must include:
> - minutes from all Program Development Advisory Committee meetings
> - Program Development Advisory Committee motions to:
>   - support the program proposal and
>   - confirm that the curriculum addresses the current and future state of the discipline or area of study,
> - Copies of all new course outlines submitted using the [New Course Template,](#)
> - curriculum map; and
> - any additional supporting documents

QualCom is responsible for ensuring the Proposal adequately addresses all of the evaluative criteria for new programs. QualCom members from the academic unit in which the program is located will declare a conflict of interest and will not be involved in decisions for new program reports for programs in their unit. QualCom will discuss the proposal and identify any concerns or issues it wishes to raise with the Chair of the Department. The Chair of the Department will be invited to a QualCom meeting to discuss these issues and concerns. The Chair of the

Department may be accompanied by the relevant Faculty Chair or another member of the Department, as appropriate.

Step 4: Ranking and Selection of External Reviewers

a) ***Ranking and Selection:*** QualCom ranks and selects a minimum of two reviewers for undergraduate and/ or graduate programs. The Office of the CAO will contact the external consultant(s) to invite and finalize the appointment, and to confirm that the external consultant(s) are free from conflict of interest as defined in the Conflict of Interest Policy for External Program Review Consultants.

Step 5: Site Visit (or Desk Review) and instructions

a) ***Site Visit or Desk Review:*** For undergraduate programs, external reviews are normally conducted on-site, but may be conducted by desk review, video-conference, or an equivalent method if the CAO or designate and external reviewers are satisfied that an off-site option is acceptable. For master's programs, an on-site visit is normally required, but certain new master's programs (e.g., professional master's programs) may be conducted by desk review, virtual site visit, or equivalent method if both the CAO or designate and external reviewers are satisfied that a proposed off-site option is acceptable. If the CAO or designate is satisfied with an off-site option for undergraduate or graduate external reviews, they will provide a clear written justification for the decision. For Doctoral programs, external reviews must be conducted on-site.

I. Site visits may be conducted on-site or virtually through videoconference. External reviewers will typically meet with the CAO and/or designate, Department Chair(s)/ School Director(s), Faculty Chair(s), members of the Program Development Team, faculty members, and students.

II. For desk reviews, the CAO or designate will contact the external reviewers virtually to explain their roles and obligations and to answer any preliminary questions. The external reviewers will be invited to contact the CAO or designate or the Office of the CAO should they have any questions over the course of the desk review.

b.) Organization

The Office of the CAO oversees all arrangements for both a site visit or Desk Review. External Reviews conducted on-site will typically be scheduled for one day, while virtual site visits can be scheduled over the course of 1 or more days to accommodate the reviewers' schedules. Reviews of multiple degree programs may require additional time. The Office of the CAO will ensure any necessary accommodations and travel arrangements for the external reviewers are made. The Office of the CAO prepares an agenda for the review in consultation with the external reviewers. The Office of the CAO will provide the external reviewers with all three sections of the complete New Program Proposal, relevant faculty CVs, Algoma University's IQAP, and the Reviewers' Report on the Proposed Program Template prior to the review.

Step 6: External Review (Reviewers' report)

The external reviewers provide a joint report using the template Reviewers' Report on New Program Proposals, which addresses the substance of the New Program Proposal. The report appraises the standards and quality of the proposed program, addresses the evaluative criteria defined in Appendix B of this policy and comments on the adequacy of existing physical, human and financial resources. The reviewers are invited to acknowledge any clearly innovative aspects of the proposed program and to make recommendations on any essential or otherwise desirable modifications to the proposed program. The External Reviewers' Report is received by the Office of the CAO within six weeks of the site visit. The CAO or designate is responsible for approving and forwarding the report to the relevant Department Chairs/Directors and Faculty Chair(s).

Step 7: Internal response

Algoma University has 30 days from receipt of the External Reviewers' Report to prepare a response to the report. Separate responses are prepared by both the group proposing the program and the CAO or designate.

Step 8: Institutional approval

Process:
   a) The External Reviewers' Report and the internal responses from the proposing Department/School or program development team and the CAO or designate are forwarded to AppCom for consideration.
   b) AppCom uses the new program proposal, the Reviewers' Report and the internal responses to the report, to prepare a recommendation on whether or not the program meets the evaluative criteria in Appendix B. AppCom may request the assistance of QualCom for this evaluation. AppCom shall make one of the following recommendations:

   i)   If the program meets the evaluative criteria in Appendix B, AppCom may recommend the new program for approval to the Senate. The proposal will proceed to the Senate for institutional approval.
   ii)   AppCom may recommend to the proposing Department or program development team that modifications be made. The recommendations are made to the Program Development Team or Department for their consideration.
      1) If modifications are made, the revised proposal can be brought forward to AppCom for approval without the completion of a second external review.
      2) If the modifications are not made, the Program Development Team or Department is expected to provide evidence-based reasons for not doing so. AppCom will review the responses and forward the proposal to the Senate upon approval. If the reasons provided are not accepted, the program proposal will not be forwarded to the Senate for approval, unless the required modifications are made and approved.

c)   The Chief Academic Officer has the authority to stop the whole process at this or any subsequent point. Upon receipt of a recommendation of the relevant Faculty Academic Dean, or for any evidence-based institutional reason, the CAO may decide to stop the whole program development process. Such reasons may include, but are not limited to the following:
- Negative recommendation received from the external referees, questioning the need for the proposed program, or noting a lack of critical resources needed to operate the program
- Changes in student demand for the proposed program
- Evidence suggesting that the student demand or business case for the proposed program is inaccurate or insufficient
- Change in budgetary considerations related to starting or operating the proposed program.

The CAO or designate will notify the Program Development Team of this decision and related reasons for it.

Step 9: Submission for approval by Quality Council
a)   The new program proposal, together with all other associated reports and internal responses to them, is submitted to the Quality Council Secretariat by the Office of the CAO using the Quality Council's submission template.

b)   In parallel, the University Registrar will submit the Program Approval Request Submission and the Program Approval Certification Form to the MCU for funding and OSAP eligibility. MCU approval is contingent upon approval by the Quality Council.

Step 10: Announcement of new programs
Following the submission of the new program proposal to the Quality Council, and subject to the approval of the CAO or designate, Algoma University may announce its intention to offer the program, provided that all communications clearly state that approval by the Quality Council is pending and that no offers of admission will be made until the program is approved by the Council. When such announcements are made in advance of Quality Council approval, they must contain the following statement *"Prospective students are advised that offers of admission to a new program may be made only after the university's own quality assurance processes have been completed and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance has approved the program."*

Step 11: Decision of Quality Council
The Quality Council's Appraisal Committee reviews and appraises the completed proposal in accordance with the elements listed in Section 2.6.2 of the QAF. This committee may seek further information from the university, in which case it will provide Algoma University with a rationale for its requests. If no further information is required, the Appraisal Committee,

through the Quality Council, will advise the university of the assessment, including one of the following recommendations:

a) Approved to commence
b) Approved to commence, with report
c) Deferred to up to one year during which time Algoma University may address identified issues and report back
d) Not approved

If the Quality Council's recommendation is one of b), c), or d), Algoma University may, within thirty days, make an appeal.

1. Algoma University may request a meeting with the Appraisal Committee for reconsideration. Normally, the grounds for seeking reconsideration are that the institution will be providing new information, or that there were errors of fact or process in the Appraisal Committee's assessment. The results of the Appraisal Committee's review and revisions, if any, will be reported to the university by the Quality Assurance Secretariat.
2. Algoma University may appeal to the Quality Council after the university submits a request for reconsideration, the Appraisal Committee revisits and may revise its assessment. The Quality Council will make a final decision once it receives the final assessment and recommendation of the Appraisal Committee along with other additional documents from the institution.

Appeal decisions of the Quality Council are final and binding. If the Quality Council chooses option c), they will provide a specified period of time for a response from the university, after which the proposal will be considered to have been withdrawn.

The Quality Council conveys its decision to Algoma University through the CAO and reports it for information to the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) and to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU). The Quality Council and Algoma University post information about decisions on approval to commence new programs on their respective websites, together with a brief description of the program.

At this point, Algoma University may make offers of admission to the program.

Step 12: Program Implementation

After a new program is approved to commence, it must begin within thirty-six months of that approval date, otherwise approval will lapse.

Stage 13: Steps to Monitor New Programs

At the end of each of the first three academic years following the commencement of a new program, new programs will be monitored by the CAO **or designate** based on the evaluative criteria for existing programs in [Appendix B](#).

A brief annual report on this monitoring is filed by the CAO or designate to Academic Planning and Priorities (AppCom) and the Quality Assurance Committee (QualCom). AppCom may require the Department to make modifications and file a report on these modifications after at least a three-year period.

The annual report of the CAO includes information such as:

- Registrations compared to enrolment projections
- Evaluation of the program's success in realizing its objectives, requirements and outcomes
- Evaluation of any changes that have occurred in the interim, including in response to any Note(s) from the Appraisal Committee
- Student retention
- The quality of the student experience as determined either through a survey, focus group, or other means

The monitoring process must take into consideration the outcomes of the interim monitoring reports and any additional areas to be considered in the first cyclical review of the program.

The first cyclical review for any new program is initiated no more than seven years after the date of the program's initial enrollment and normally in accordance with Algoma University's program review schedule.

1.5.1 Selection for Cyclical Audit

New programs that have been approved within the period since the previous Audit was conducted are eligible for selection for the university's next Cyclical Audit. An audit cannot reverse the approval of a program to commence.

1.6 Expedited Approvals

Introduction and Scope

Algoma University's IQAP requires that this expedited approval protocol be used for the development and approval of new Type 2 and 3 graduate diploma programs.

Process

The respective Department/School is required to submit a proposal to the Quality Council that addresses the applicable Evaluation Criteria detailed in Appendix B of this document and Section 2.1.2 of the QAF.

After reviewing the submission, the Quality Council's Appraisal Committee will confer with Algoma University, receive further information as needed, and come to its decision. Any consultations will normally be brief and result in one of the following decisions:

   a) Approved to Commence
   b) Approved to Commence, with Report
   c) Not Approved

This step will normally be completed within 45 days of receipt of the university's submission, provided that the submission is complete and satisfactory. Where additional information is required by the Appraisal Committee, one of the three decisions (see above) will be made within a further 30 days of receipt of a satisfactory response. The Quality Assurance Secretariat will convey the decision of the Appraisal Committee to the Quality Council for information, and then to Algoma University. The University may consult with or submit an appeal to the Committee as described in sections 2.7.1 - 2.7.4 of the QAF.

Selection for Cyclical Audit

Programs created or modified through an Expedited Approval are not normally subject to the Cyclical Audit.

2.0 Guidelines for Major Modifications (Program Renewal and Significant Change)

This section of the IQAP describes Algoma University's internal approval processes and the expedited approval processes that can be utilized when existing programs are revised. All program revisions are expected to align with the Algoma University Strategic Mandate Agreement, Strategic Plan, Academic Plan, and Special Mission.

In light of Algoma University's Special Mission, all academic units are encouraged to consider adding Indigenous learning outcomes, adopted from the Negahneewin Research Centre at Confederation College (Appendix D) when performing a major modification to an existing program.

2.1 Scope

All program revisions are subject to Algoma University's internal quality assurance policies and processes. In some instances, a program revision is considered a "major modification" to a program. In these instances, approval from the Quality Council may be sought through an expedited program approvals protocol, but is not required.

Major modifications are made with the goal of continuous program improvement. These modifications typically:
- Implement the outcomes of a Cyclical Program Review
- Reflect the ongoing evolution of the discipline
- Accommodate new developments in a particular field
- Facilitate improvements in teaching and learning strategies
- Respond to the changing needs of students, society, and industry
- Respond to improvements in technology

The Quality Council has the final authority to decide if a major modification constitutes a new program and must therefore follow the Protocol for New Program Approvals.

2.2 Identifying a Major Modification

The first step is to consider whether or not the proposed changes represent a minor, major or substantial modification to the program. Refer to Appendix F "Definitions" to determine which category of modification each proposed change to the program would be classified as.

Undergraduate or graduate program suspensions or closures are considered substantial major modifications. Low-demand academic programs (such as programs with sustained low, declining, or no enrollment) will be considered for suspension or closure, upon recommendation by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee. These decisions will be implemented in such a manner as to ensure that any existing students in the respective program can complete their degree.

In cases where it is unclear whether a proposed program change is a minor modification, major modification, or substantial major modification, a binding determination will be made by QualCom.

2.3 Submission Process

When considering program revisions, the Internal quality assurance process considers the applicable evaluative criteria in Appendix B of this policy.

All program revisions are evaluated using the evaluative criteria in Appendix B and must be submitted using the Algoma University Revised Program Template . The documentation required for a program revision varies according to the scope of the modification. There are three sections in the template:
1. **Section A**: required for all program revisions, including minor modifications

2. **Section B**: required for all major modifications
3. **Section C**: required for major modifications classified as substantial

The amount and type of information required in the template varies depending on the nature of the proposed change. Definitions for each category of program revision can be found in Appendix F, Definitions. It is highly recommended that those completing the template seek advice and assistance from the Office of the CAO or a QualCom member.

The department or program submitting the modification has to ensure that the proposed modification is aligned with the relevant program-level learning outcomes. In addition, the internal review and approval process must include an assessment of the impact the proposed modification will have on the program's students. Furthermore, it is required that input from current students and recent graduates of the program be considered as part of the development of the Proposal, with the Proposal including a statement on the way in which the proposed major modification will improve the student experience.

2.4 Approvals

For minor modifications, the Algoma University Revised Program Template (Section A only) must be completed. This form requires sequential approval at the level of the Department/School, the Faculty, Curriculum Committee, and the Senate. Completed Revised Program Templates must be sent to QualCom for information and tracking purposes.

For major modifications and substantial major modifications, the Revised Program Template requires approval at the university level, but need not be sent to the Quality Council. The internal process requires approvals by the Department, Faculty, QualCom, Academic Planning and Priorities Committee, and Senate. The curriculum changes are evaluated using the applicable evaluative criteria in Appendix B.

When a major modification is identified, Algoma University has the option of requesting endorsement from the Quality Council by submitting a Proposal Brief, which will include:

a) A description of, and rationale for, the proposed changes
b) Application of the relevant criteria, outlined in Appendix B to the proposed changes.

Algoma University has the option of requesting that the Quality Council review major modification proposals through its expedited approval process. Please see section 1.6 above for more details.

2.5 Outcomes

Algoma University values and encourages ongoing and continuous assessment of its academic programs and welcomes the modification of programs where required to provide contemporary, high-demand, and vibrant programming that serves the needs of students and provides a purposeful and contemporary educational environment. In alignment with its Special Mission,

Algoma University places a strong emphasis on this ongoing program self-assessment and commitment to quality education.

2.6 Reporting

Algoma University will submit to the Quality Council an annual report that provides a summary of major and substantial major program modifications that were approved through the university's internal approval process in the past year. This report will also include all program closures that happened over the previous academic year. It is the responsibility of the Chief Academic Officer or designate to submit a report to the Quality Council by July 31 of each year. The annual report includes:

a) A description of, and rationale for, the proposed changes; and
b) Application of the relevant criteria outlined in Appendix B, to the proposed changes.

The report is submitted using the template provided by the Quality Council.

2.7 Selection for Cyclical Audit

Major modifications are not normally subject to Algoma University's Cyclical Audit.

3.0 Guidelines for Cyclical Program Reviews

All existing undergraduate and graduate degree programs and graduate diploma programs are subject to periodic cyclical review conducted at a minimum once every 7 years on a schedule established by the Quality Assurance Committee (QualCom). For a current review schedule, refer to Appendix E. The first Cyclical Review of any new program will be scheduled within 7 years after the date of the program's first enrolment. Reviews of undergraduate and graduate programs for the same discipline will be conducted concurrently.

3.1 General Principles

To monitor and improve the quality of its programs, Algoma University regularly reviews its academic programs. The purpose of the review process is to ensure the quality and relevance of the university's programs through an analytical and comprehensive analysis of the program. This analysis provides an opportunity for systematic reflection that will result in recommendations for actions that enhance the quality of the program. The primary goal of Cyclical Program Reviews is continuous quality improvement.

Cyclical Program Reviews have six principal components:
a) Self-study
b) External review with report and recommendation on program quality improvement

c) Institutional evaluation of the Self-Study and an External Review Report resulting in recommendations for program quality improvement
d) Preparation and adoption of plans to implement the recommendations and to monitor their implementation
e) Follow up reporting on the principal findings of the review
f) Implementation of the recommendations

The benchmarks for assessing a program's standard and quality are the university degree-level expectations (Appendix A) and program-level learning outcomes.

3.2 Outcomes

The key outcome from a Cyclical Program Review is the Final Assessment Report and associated Implementation Plan, which identify changes needed to maintain the quality of academic programs. Any required program changes identified in the Implementation Plan form the basis of a continuous improvement process through monitoring of key performance indicators. Primary responsibility to execute the Implementation Plan lies within the role of the Department Chair(s)/Director. The execution of this plan must include identified timelines and timely communication to stakeholders.

3.3 Scope

This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate degree programs and it also includes all joint, multi-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, multi-sited and inter-institutional programs, and all modes of delivery. Programs that have been closed or for which admission has been suspended are out of scope for a Cyclical Program Review.

In some cases, accreditation reviews can substitute for some portions of the review process. In the case where an accreditation review is substituted for a portion of Algoma University's undergraduate and graduate cyclical program review process, the accreditation review must be fully consistent with the requirements of the Quality Assurance Framework of the Quality Council (QAF 5.5). Any such substitution proposal may be made by the Chair of the Self-Study Committee and approved by the CAO or designate. A record of any such substitution or addition is signed by the CAO or designate and archived in the CAO's Office. The record of substitution must outline the grounds on which the substitution or addition was made; it must be made available to the Quality Council auditors upon request.

For single discipline programs - offered in more than one location, in more than one delivery mode or different program levels (ie. undergraduate and graduate) - a single omnibus report will be completed that addresses how the evaluative criteria are met in each location and with each different mode of delivery and program level. The self study and External Reviewers' Report must explicitly address the distinctive attributes of each location and delivery mode.

When reviewing joint or inter-institutional programs, the IQAPs of each participating university granting the degree will be considered. Preparation of self-study, organization for the site visit, selection of the external reviewers, response to the External Reviewers' Report, and preparation of a Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan will be undertaken in accordance with Algoma's IQAP, and shared with the partner institution(s). The completed Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan will go through the appropriate governance and approval processes at each partner institution and will be posted on each institution's website. Each partner institution will decide independently on an appropriate monitoring process for the Implementation Plan. The Final Assessment Plan and Implementation Plan will be submitted separately to the Quality Council by each institution.

Interdisciplinary programs are considered to be distinct entities and will be included in the schedule of cyclical reviews. Cyclical Program Reviews undertaken within the period since the conduct of the previous Audit are eligible for selection for the university's next Cyclical Audit.

3.4 Institutional Manual

The Office of the CAO provides for the preparation and maintenance of an institutional manual that describes the Cyclical Program Review process and supports such reviews. This manual will include:

1. Guidance on how to conduct rigorous, objective and searching self-studies, and descriptions of the potential benefits that can accrue from them
2. Criteria for the nomination and selection of arm's length external reviewers
3. Identification of who is responsible for the collection, aggregation, and distribution of institutional data and outcome measures required for self-studies
4. The format required for the Self-Study and External Reviewers' Report
5. The institution's cycle for the conduct of program reviews

3.5 Steps in the Cyclical Review Process

Step	Description	Approval/ Party(ies) responsible
Step 1	Preparation for Program Review ● Department Chairs meet with the Office of the CAO approx. 6 months before start of Cyclical Program Review ● Written notification of Cyclical Program Review ● Workshop on learning outcomes and their assessment	Office of the CAO
Step 2	Forming the Self Study Committee	Office of CAO and

	● Composition submitted to CAO or designate by October 15th	Department Chair
Step 3	Cyclical Program Review orientation and workshop ● Normally occurs between October 15- December 1	Office of CAO
Step 4	Preparation and Collection of Data for Self-Study and Appendices	Department
Step 5	Discuss progress to date ● Self Study Chair and CAO or designate meet by February 1	Department and CAO or designate
Step 6	Write and Complete the Self Study ● Submitted August 1st	Department
Step 7	Faculty Chair reviews and approves Self Study	Faculty Chair
Step 8	CAO or designate forwards Self Study to QualCom	CAO or designate
Step 9	QualCom review and approval	QualCom
Step 10	Ranking and selection of external reviewers	QualCom
Step 11	Site Visit and instructions	CAO or designate
Step 12	External Reviewers' Report submitted to CAO or designate	CAO or designate
Step 13	Internal response to External Reviewers' report ● Department response (1 month) ● CAO's or designate's response (1 month)	Department and CAO or designate
Step 14	Report on Program Quality	QualCom
Step 15	Prioritized Recommendations	AppCom
Step 16	Implementation Plan (1 month)	AppCom and Department
Step 17	Final Assessment Report development	CAO or designate
Step 18	Final Assessment Report approval	AppCom Senate
Step 19	18 month report on status of Implementation Plan written by the Department and submitted to CAO or designate	QualCom
Step 20	Senate approval of 18 month status report	Senate

3.6 The Process

The step-wise process below describes the Cyclical Program Review Process from start to finish in detail.

Step 1: Preparation for Program Review

In preparation for the program review process, the Office of the CAO will call a meeting with the Department Chairs for the programs under review in the year before the review commences. The CAO or designate will identify the specific program or programs that will be reviewed and identify, where there is more than one delivery mode or site involved, the distinct versions of each program that are to be reviewed. At this meeting, the CAO or designate will provide an overview of learning outcomes and learning outcomes assessment, which are fundamental to the review. This meeting will be held approximately six months prior to the official notification from the CAO or designate to the Chairs of the forthcoming program review. Following this meeting, representatives from the Office of the CAO will meet again with the program faculty to conduct a workshop on learning outcomes and their assessment.

On September 1 of the year of the review, the CAO or designate will notify the Department Chair in writing of the forthcoming program review and provide them with a copy of the IQAP and the IQAP Manual.

Step 2: Forming the Self-Study Committee

The Self-Study is conducted by a Self-Study Committee. The Self-Study Committee is assembled by the Department Chair in consultation with the Office of the CAO. The Self-Study Committee is normally led by the Department Chair, and includes a minimum of one faculty member from the program under review, a faculty member from another department who is at arm's length from the program under review, and two upper-year students and at least one student from first or second year who are majoring in the program under review. If the Department Chair is the only full-time faculty member from the program under review, full-time faculty from a cognate program within the Department or Faculty will be called upon to serve on the committee. The Self-Study Committee need not be chaired by the Department Chair in instances where a program is housed in a department where the Department Chair is not a faculty member from the program under review. It must, however, be chaired by a full-time faculty member from the program under review.

When possible, the Algoma faculty on the Self-Study Committee should be senior faculty (preferably Associate or Full Professors) with program management experience. The Self-Study Committee will participate directly in the preparation of the *Critical Analysis of the Program under Review* section of the Self-Study. The Self-Study Committee will actively seek the input and views of program faculty, staff, students, and community stakeholders.

The Self-Study Committee Chair submits the composition of the Self-Study Committee to the Office of the CAO by October 15.

Step 3: Cyclical Program Review orientation and workshop

Once the Self-Study Committee has been constituted, the Office of the CAO calls a meeting with the Self-Study Committee. This meeting normally occurs between October 15 and December 1. In this meeting, the Office of the CAO provides clear direction on expectations for the Self-Study, provides a customized Self-Study Template with program data included, and reviews key aspects of learning outcomes and their assessment. The CAO or designate reviews the manual previously provided to the Department Chair that describes:

- the Cyclical Review Process;
- the benefits of the process;
- the criteria for selection of members of the review committee;
- who is responsible for the collection, aggregation and distribution of data and outcome measures required for the Self-Study;
- the format of the Self-Study; the format for the report of the Review Committee; and,
- the cycle for undergraduate and graduate program reviews.

Step 4: Preparation and Collection of Data for Self Study and Appendices

The Self-Study Committee ensures that a program's faculty, staff, and students are actively involved in the preparation of the Self-Study. The preparation is an active process that includes activities such as: student surveys; focus groups for faculty, staff, and students; discussions with external stakeholders; advisory committee meetings; retreats and meetings with program faculty; as well as stakeholder review of the various drafts of the Self-Study.

Requirements of the Self-Study

The Self-Study is a fundamental part of the review. The Self-Study is a broad-based, reflective, and forward-looking document. It includes a critical analysis of each discrete program under review. The CAO or designate monitors the progress of the Self-Study and ensures it is completed in accordance with the review schedule.

The final version of the Self-Study is submitted to the Faculty Chair by August 1 (11 months from the time the Department Chair received written notification of the forthcoming review). The Office of the CAO works with the Faculty Chair to monitor the August 1 submission deadline.

The Department Chair shall submit the Self-Study to the Faculty Chair in four separate sections as outlined below.

- Section One   Critical analysis of the program under review
- Section Two   Curricula vitarum of the faculty
- Section Three List of proposed consultants
- Section Four   Supplementary Appendices

Submissions are to be submitted electronically in a PDF format. Assistance in organizing and formatting the Self-Study is provided by the Office of the CAO. Section three must be submitted to the Office of the CAO by August 1.

In the event that the Faculty Chair is identical to the ex-officio Departmental Chair of the department submitting the Self-Study, the CAO or designate will select a Chair from another Faculty to review and approve the Self-Study.

Section One of Self-Study: Critical Analysis of the Program under Review

The content in this section of the Self-Study will facilitate the assessment of the program's alignment with the evaluative criteria in Appendix C of the IQAP. The Self-Study will address and document concerns and recommendations raised in previous reviews that have since been addressed, especially those detailed in the Final Assessment Report, Implementation Plan and subsequent monitoring reports from the previous Cyclical Review of the program. The Self-Study will address questions such as those listed below (the points below serve as examples and do not represent a complete list):

- Is the program consistent with the vision, Special Mission, Strategic Mandate Agreement, and Strategic Plan of the university, and Academic Plan? Does the program fit into the broader array of program offerings, particularly in areas of teaching and research strength?
- Algoma University programs are designed to develop student's professional capacity/autonomy for employment, further study, and community involvement. Is the program designed to maximize the graduates' potential for employment and promotion in their field of study and further study?
- Are the program requirements and associated learning outcomes consistent with Algoma University's expression of the undergraduate and graduate degree-level expectations?
- Does the curriculum reflect the current state of the discipline or area of study? Does the curriculum ensure continuing relevance to the field of practice it serves?
- Are the learning outcomes appropriate and clear? Is the program appropriately designed and structured to achieve the learning outcomes?
- Are the means of assessment, particularly in the students' final year of the program, appropriate and effective to demonstrate achievement of the program-level learning outcomes and the university undergraduate or graduate degree-level expectations?
- Are the student success and student experience indicators used in the Self-Study consistent with a quality undergraduate or graduate program?
- Does the Department and institution undertake initiatives to enhance the quality of the program and the associated learning and teaching environment?
- Are the relevant academic services that directly contribute to the academic quality of the program under review adequate?

A Self-Study shall require statements relating to the evaluative criteria in [Appendix C](#) of this policy. Self-Studies shall follow the Self-Study Template provided by the Office of the CAO.

Section Two
The Curricula Vitarum of the Faculty

Self Studies must contain the C.V.s for all full-time program faculty who regularly teach courses in the program as well as for all part-time faculty who have taught in the program in the past five years. The C.V.s are presented in a C.V. format and are presented separately from the section on the program.

Section Three
The List of Proposed External Reviewers

Normally, proposed External Reviewers are active and respected in their field, are at the rank of associate or full professor or the equivalent, and have suitable disciplinary expertise, qualifications and program management experience. A background and/or demonstrated experience assisting programs in incorporating employability objectives into curriculum design is desirable. External reviewers are at [arm's length](#) from the program under review with no conflict of interest. It is recommended the Department propose consultants who are from institutions that possess characteristics similar to Algoma University, for example small, primarily undergraduate institutions. The Department presents to QualCom at least eight nominations for proposed External Reviewers. The Department will not contact the nominees with respect to the nominations. The Conflict of Interest Policy for External Program Reviewers must be followed during the assignment of external reviewers.

The Department will provide a list containing the following information for each nominee to the Office of the CAO no later than August 1:

- Name and contact information (current telephone number and email address)
- Rank/position
- Institution/firm – current address, including telephone number
- Degrees – designation, university, discipline
- Area of research expertise
- Relevant professional experience/expertise

The CAO or designate will immediately forward Section Three to QualCom for review and selection of External Reviewers.

Section Four: Supplementary Appendices
Use this section for any supplementary material referred to in Section One: *Critical Analysis of the Program under Review.*

Step 5: Discuss progress to date

The Chair of the Self-Study Committee is required to meet with the CAO or designate by February 1 to discuss progress on the Self-Study.

Step 6: Complete and Submit the Self-Study

The final version of the Self-Study is submitted by the Department Chair to the Faculty Chair by August 1 (11 months from the time the Department Chair received written notification of the forthcoming review). The Department Chair must also forward Section 3 to the Office of the CAO for distribution to QualCom. The CAO or designate is responsible for working with the Faculty Chair to monitor the August 1 submission deadline. Self-Studies are to be submitted electronically in a PDF format in accordance with the Self-Study Template provided by the Office of the CAO.

Step 7: Faculty Chair reviews and signs off on Self Study

The Faculty Chair is responsible for providing to the Department a first tier of review for the Self-Study. The Faculty Chair works with the Department to prepare a version of the Self-Study that is acceptable to the Faculty and the Department.

When the Self-Study is deemed acceptable by the Faculty Chair, the Self-Study Sign-Off Sheet is completed and signed. All four sections of the completed Self-Study, accompanied by the Sign-Off Sheet, are submitted by the Faculty Chair to the CAO or designate.

Step 8: CAO or Designate forwards Self Study to QualCom

The CAO or designate immediately forwards the Self-Study to QualCom for consideration. The Office of the CAO is responsible for ensuring the completed Self-Study is received by QualCom by September 1.

Step 9: QualCom Review and Approval

QualCom ensures the Self-Study meets all of the criteria listed in Appendix C and that it is a critically reflective and forward-looking document with specific plans and projections, not simply a compilation of facts and figures.

QualCom is responsible for ensuring the Self-Study adequately addresses all of the evaluative criteria for program reviews. QualCom members from the academic unit in which the program is located will declare a conflict of interest and will not be involved in decisions for Self-Studies for programs in their unit. QualCom will discuss the report and identify any concerns or issues it wishes to raise with the Chair of the Self-Study Committee. The Chair of the Self-Study Committee will be invited to a QualCom meeting to discuss any of the concerns addressed by QualCom. The Chair of the Self-Study Committee may be accompanied by the relevant Faculty

Chair or another member of the Self-Study Committee. QualCom will make one of three decisions with respect to the Self-Study:

i. The Self-Study is ready for external review and a motion is passed to accept the completed Self-Study
ii. The Self-Study would benefit from minor improvements. QualCom will prepare a letter advising the Self-Study Committee Chair of the improvements and will delegate a committee member to work with the Self-Study Committee Chair to complete these improvements
iii. The Self-Study requires major improvements which will require the Self-Study to be considered by QualCom a second time

QualCom's decision will immediately be communicated by the Chair of QualCom to the Department Chair in writing, with correspondence copied to the Faculty Chair.

Step 10: Ranking and selection of external reviewers

a) *Ranking and Selection:*
QualCom will appoint two external reviewers from the list of proposed consultants advanced by the Department in Section Three of the Self-Study and schedule a date for the site visit between September - December. Both external reviewers must be from outside the university. There are a minimum of two such reviewers for all programs.

The Office of the CAO makes the initial contact with the external reviewers to confirm availability and that the proposed reviewers are free of any conflict of interest as defined in the Conflict of Interest for External Program Review Consultants. Following such confirmation, the Office of the CAO finds an appropriate time for the site visit and prepares an agenda. Contact with potential external reviewers will occur as early as possible in the fall term. The site visit will occur during the fall term in year two of the review.

The Office of the CAO ensures accommodation and travel arrangements for the external reviewers are coordinated, if required.

b) *The Review Committee:*

The Review Committee is composed of the two external reviewers. The work of the Review Committee occurs in year two of the review in accordance with the timelines in this section of the policy.

At the discretion of the CAO or designate additional members may be assigned to the Review Committee. This might be appropriate, for example, in the case of professional programs or programs leading to membership in regulated professions. In such cases, appropriately qualified and experienced people may be added to the Review Committee.

c) *Review Committee Briefing:*

Prior to the site visit, the Review Committee receives a written briefing from the CAO or designate that includes the following:

- A statement recognizing the university's autonomy in determining priorities for funding, space, and faculty allocation
- The roles and obligations of the Review Committee
- The evaluative criteria for existing program reviews
- Any additional questions QualCom wishes the Review Committee to consider
- A description of the Review Committee's role in identifying the program's notable strengths, areas for improvement, and opportunities for enhancement
- A statement that indicates all aspects of the review process are confidential
- The Review Committee report guidelines, including a request to distinguish between recommendations for improvement that the Department can itself undertake and those that require external action in the report
- A tentative schedule of Review Committee meetings;
- The university's [Special Mission], current [Strategic] and [Academic] Plans, and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Charter]
- Any other relevant documents that guide planning (e.g., [Strategic Mandate Agreement])
- The completed Self-Study
- Algoma University's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) document;
- A copy of the Department's previous final Cyclical Program Review if applicable
- A statement from the Office of the CAO commenting on the Self-Study
- A copy of the [Review Committee Report on Existing Programs Template]

The Review Committee requests from the Office of the CAO any additional information it deems necessary prior to the site visit.

Step 11: Site Visit and Instructions

September – December

External review of undergraduate programs will normally be conducted on-site, but the CAO or designate may propose that the review be conducted by desk review, virtual site visit or an equivalent method if the external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable. The CAO or designate must provide a clear justification for the decision to use an alternative site visit method. Certain graduate level programs (e.g., professional master's programs, fully online programs, etc.) may also be conducted by desk review, virtual site visit, or an equivalent method if both the CAO or designate and external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable. An on-site visit is required for all other master's and all doctoral programs.

During the site visit, the Review Committee meets *in camera* with the CAO and/or designate. In this meeting, the Review Committee will discuss procedural details, go over the Review Committee briefing, request additional information, and ask questions clarifying its roles and responsibilities.

The Review Committee will then meet with:
- Faculty within the Department
- Program support staff
- Students within the Department
- Faculty Chair
- University Registrar
- Graduates of the program
- Employers of program graduates
- Any other members of the university community that can provide information (e.g. Librarian, Director of Information Technology Services, etc.). In addition, site visits for professional programs will also include opinions of employers and professional associations, which will either be solicited through surveys, written letters, or meetings with the External Reviewers.

Before concluding the visit, the Review Committee will meet with the CAO and/or designate for a debriefing session. The CAO and/or designate will provide preliminary oral feedback on the outcome of the visit and an evaluation of the process.

Step 12: External Reviewers' Report submitted to CAO or Designate

On behalf of the Review Committee, the external reviewers will produce one joint report using the Reviewers' Report on Existing Program template, provided by the Office of the CAO. The Review Committee report should address the substance of both the Self-Study and the evaluative criteria in Appendix C. The spirit of the review will be constructive.

In its report, the Review Committee will respond to the issues identified in the Department's Self-Study and to issues that arise during the site visit. The External Reviewers' Report will identify, provide evidence of and commend the program's notably strong and creative attributes and significant innovation in the content and/or delivery of the program relative to other such programs. The report provides a considered overview of the program's respective strengths, areas for improvement, and opportunities for enhancement. In its report, the Review Committee will make at least three recommendations for specific steps to be taken that will lead to the continuous improvement of the program. In doing so, it will distinguish between those steps the Department can itself take, those that require the administration's action, and those that require additional resources or external action. In cases where there are more than one program/program level (i.e. graduate and undergraduate) program modes, and/or programs offered at different locations, the Review Committee's Report will identify attributes of each discrete program documented in the Self-Study.

The Review Committee's central objective is to assess how current programs could be improved to better serve students given the available resources. In light of financial restraints, any recommendations, including faculty or resources, must be considered in the context of current financial resources. While the External Reviewers' Report may include commentary on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, recommendations on these or any other elements that are within the

purview of the Algoma University's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality and sustainability.

The report will address the evaluative criteria outlined in Appendix C.

The report must be submitted to the CAO or **designate** no later than one month after the site visit. The CAO or designate will ensure the report is complete and has adequately addressed all the evaluative criteria with respect to the program review. If the CAO or designate finds the report to be deficient in any way, the CAO or designate will communicate with the Review Committee to rectify the situation.

Step 13: Internal Response to Reviewers' Report

a) ***CAO or designate accepts report and forwards to Department:*** When the CAO or designate is satisfied that the report is complete, the report is forwarded to the Self-Study Committee Chair, the Department Chair (if different from the Self-Study Committee Chair), and the Faculty Chair. The report will be accompanied by a summary listing all the issues, concerns, and recommendations raised in the report to which the Department will need to respond. The CAO or designate has one month from receipt of the Reviewers' Report to forward a complete report along with the summary of issues, concerns, and recommendations.

b) ***Department's Response (1 month):*** The Department that conducted the Self-Study will work with the Faculty Chair to respond to the contents of the Reviewers' Report within one month. The response must address all issues, concerns, and recommendations in the report. There may be recommendations the Department does not wish to implement; however, a response to these items is still required outlining the reasons why the Department feels it is not appropriate to implement the recommendations. The Department may seek input from current students, with special consideration to student members of the self study committee. The response forms the basis of the Implementation Plan, an important product of the program review process. The CAO or designate monitors the one month deadline for submission.

c) ***CAO's or designate's response:*** Once the CAO or designate has received the Department's response, the CAO or designate will have one month to provide a response to the Review Committee's report addressing each of the following:

   1. The plans and recommendations proposed in the Self-Study
   2. The recommendations advanced by the Review Committee
   3. The Department's response to the Review Committee's report(s)
   4. Any changes in organization, policy, or governance that would be necessary to meet the recommendations
   5. The resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided to support the implementation of selected recommendations
   6. A proposed timeline for the implementation of these recommendations

The CAO or designate forwards the Department's response and the CAO's or designate's response to QualCom.

Step 14: Report on Program Quality

At its next meeting, QualCom will study the documents and prepare a report on program quality using the issues, concerns, and recommendations emerging from the reports. The report on program quality will provide one of the following three program quality evaluations:

1. **Good quality** – QualCom has no serious concerns about program quality, as it is apparent that students are receiving a sound educational experience. The number and nature of the recommendations for quality enhancement, while they may be significant, do not impact the overall quality or viability of the program.
2. **Good quality with minor concerns** – QualCom has some concerns about the quality of the program. The recommendations for quality improvement need to be implemented in order to enhance the overall quality and viability of the program.
3. **Identified with quality concerns** – QualCom has significant concerns about the quality of the program. Intervention is needed in order to transform the program into one that is viable and of high quality. Programs identified as category three may be recommended for closure.

QualCom will forward the Report on Program Quality to AppCom.

Step 15: AppCom prioritized recommendations

AppCom will review the report at its next meeting and prioritize the recommendations that are selected for implementation. AppCom prepares a cover letter summarizing the prioritized recommendations and sends the report on program quality along with the summary of prioritized recommendations to the Self-Study Committee Chair, Department Chair (if different from Self-Study Chair), and the Faculty Chair.

Step 16: Implementation Plan

AppCom will request that the Department Chair and Faculty Chair work together to create a first draft of the Implementation Plan that includes the proposed timelines for implementation of the recommendations, who will be responsible for acting on these recommendations, and any resources that will be required.

The Department Chair must submit the draft Implementation Plan to the Office of the CAO within one month. The CAO or designate monitors the one month submission deadline.

Step 17: Final Assessment Report Development

The CAO or designate prepares the Final Assessment Report (FAR) that summarizes and evaluates the Review Committee's report, the internal responses, the report on program quality, the final recommendation, and the final implementation plan. The Final Assessment Report must include an Executive Summary excluding any confidential information which is to be

published on the Algoma University website alongside the associated Implementation Plan. The Final Assessment Report provides an institutional synthesis of the external evaluation and internal responses, and will:

- Identify any significant strengths of the program
- List all recommendations of the external reviewers and the associated separate internal responses and assessment from the unit and from the CAO or designate
- Identify opportunities for program improvement and enhancement with a view towards continuous improvement
- Include any additional recommendations that the program/Department, the CAO or designate, the Department Chair, the Faculty Chair and/or the university may have identified as requiring action as a result of the program's review
- Set out and prioritize the recommendations that are selected for implementation
- Explain why any external reviewers' recommendations are not selected for further action in the Implementation Plan and have not been prioritized
- Include a confidential section, if required (for example, where personnel issues need to be addressed)
- Contain an institutional Executive Summary and the Implementation Plan that is suitable for publication on the web
- Identify who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the Final Assessment Report
- Include the final Implementation Plan that:
  - o Sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that are selected for implementation
  - o Identifies the group or individual responsible for providing resources needed to address recommendations from the external reviewers or action items identified by the university
  - o Identifies who will be responsible for acting on these recommendations; and,
  - o Specific timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations

Step 18: Final Assessment Report Approval and reporting

The CAO or designate forwards the completed FAR and Implementation Plan to AppCom for approval.

AppCom has two months from receipt of the implementation plan to forward the completed Final Assessment Report, including the Implementation Plan, (excluding all confidential information) to the Senate for approval.

Step 19: 18 month status report

The Department will prepare a report on the status of the Implementation Plan 18 months following the Senate's approval of the FAR. The CAO or designate will monitor the completion of the status report. The Department will submit the status report to the Office of the CAO who

will then submit it to QualCom for review. QualCom may request additional information or action from the Department.

Step 20: Senate approval of 18 month status report

When QualCom is satisfied with the 18-Month Status Report, QualCom will forward a recommendation to the Senate for approval of the report.

3.7 Reporting Requirements

All documents created in the review process are afforded an appropriate level of confidentiality, and are made publically available only under the direction of the CAO or designate, except the publicly posted Executive Summary, Implementation Plan and the 18 Month Status Report (Report on the Status of the Implementation Plan).

3.7.1 Internal reporting requirements

AppCom will distribute the approved FAR and its associated Implementation Plan to the Department, and the Faculty Chair to "own" and act on as appropriate.

For each FAR, the Office of the CAO will post the institutional Executive Summary and the Implementation Plan on the Algoma University Quality Assurance webpage and provide copies to the Board of Governors of Algoma University. For programs offered at an affiliate institution, the Executive Summary and Implementation Plan must also be publicly posted on their website in an easily discoverable place.

The University will ensure that recommendations are implemented in a timely manner, and the appropriate distribution, including posting of the scheduled monitoring reports on the Algoma University website. It is recommended that the Department post the Executive Summary and Implementation Plan on its website.

The Office of the CAO will post the approved 18-month status report on the university website. The Office of the CAO will forward the Senate-approved 18 month status report to the Board of Governors for information.

Public access will not be granted to the information made available for the Self-Study, the Self-Study, the report of the Review Committee or internal responses to the report of the Review Committee. All internal documents and meetings of program reviews are confidential.

3.7.2 External reporting requirements

The Office of the CAO will submit the approved FAR (excluding all confidential information), Executive Summary and associated Implementation Plan for each completed Cyclical Program Review to the Quality Council.

4.0 Cyclical University Audit

4.1 Cyclical Audit Overview

All publically assisted universities in Ontario associated with quality assurance have committed to participating in an institutional-level audit process over an 8-year cycle, established by the Quality Council. The final Audit Report will determine the extent to which Algoma University is compliant with the IQAP and the level of future oversight by the Quality Council. The audit is supported by an assessment of performance by the Quality Council.

The objective of the Cyclical Audit is to provide necessary accountability to Algoma University's principal stakeholders - students, government, employers, and the public. This is accomplished by assessing whether the University's internally-defined quality assurance policies, processes, procedures and practices align with and satisfy the Quality Assurance Framework. The Cyclical Audit will evaluate past and current practices as well as Algoma University's approach to continuous program improvement, while helping to support a culture of supporting program-level learning outcomes, student-centred learning and an overall culture of continuous improvement. A Cyclical Audit is an opportunity for Algoma University to review any changes in quality assurance policy, process and practice that resulted from the previous audit and help to ensure the continuous improvement of programs.

If the Quality Council identifies at least one Cause for Concern or if it has some concerns about the quality assurance processes, an additional review may need to be performed in the form of a focused audit.

The Quality Council's Quality Assurance Framework indicates the means of selection of the auditors, together with the steps in the audit process.

Approximately one-year prior to the start of the scheduled Cyclical Audit, the Secretariat will arrange an in-person half-day briefing with the University. An Audit Team member will also be present. The Quality Assurance Secretariat and a member of the Audit Team will provide an orientation to the CAO or designate and any other relevant university stakeholder(s).

4.2.2 Institutional Self-Study

Under the supervision of the CAO's designate, the Office of the CAO will prepare an institutional Self-Study. This Self-Study will present and critically assess Algoma University's quality assurance processes, including any challenges and opportunities from within the institution, with an emphasis on any issues that arose during the previous audit. Approval of this Self-Study is required by QualCom and the Senate. Once approved by the Senate, this Institutional Self-Study is submitted to the Quality Assurance Secretariat in advance of the Desk Review by the Office of the CAO.

4.2.3 Site Visit
Prior to the site visit, the Audit Team will independently select a sample of programs for the audit that represent the New Program Approval Protocol and the Cyclical Program Review Protocol described in the QAF. The Office of the CAO is responsible for collecting and compiling all documents required for the Desk Review as outlined in the QAF.

Following the Desk Review, auditors will normally perform an on-site visit to the university for 2-3 days with the purpose of gaining a complete and accurate understanding of the university's application of the IQAP. Any gaps that arose during the Desk Review will be addressed. This site visit will include meetings with senior academic leadership including: the CAO and/or designate, Faculty Academic Deans, QualCom, AppCom, representatives from those programs selected for audit, students, and representatives of units that play an important role in ensuring program quality and success. The University, in consultation with the auditors will establish the agenda for these meetings prior to the site visit.

4.2.4 Audit Report
Following the conduct of the audit, the auditors will prepare a draft report inclusive of recommendations to the Quality Council while following the applicable procedures and regulations as outlined in section 6.2.7 of the QAF. The university will have an opportunity to review the draft report for factual accuracy prior to final review and approval by the Quality Council.

4.2.5 Publication of main audit findings and Institutional Follow-up Response Report
The Office of the CAO will publish the Audit Report, minus any addendums that detail findings related to the audit programs, on the university website. In the event that a Follow-up Response Report is required, (as per section 6.2.7 of the QAF) the Office of the CAO will submit a report, inclusive of a detail of the steps taken to address any recommendations and/or Cause(s) for Concern determined in the Audit, within the provided time frame to the Quality Council for approval. The Office of the CAO will publish a copy of the Follow-up Response Report and the Auditors' Report on the scope and adequacy of the university's response on the university website. The Quality Council may trigger a Focused Audit if the Audit Report identifies at least one Cause for Concern or if they have concerns about the quality assurance process at the university. The Focused Audit may be conducted either with an additional site visit or in the form of a Desk Review. The Office of the CAO will post the Focused Audit Report on their website.

Appendix A: Degree-Level Expectations

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

BACHELOR'S DEGREE: GENERAL

General Bachelor's degree programs are normally designed to require some conceptual sophistication, and specialized knowledge in at least one discipline or field.

These programs typically require less intensive disciplinary specialization than an academically-oriented honours program and less preparation for employment in a field of practice than a honours program in an applied or professional area of study.

In addition to personal and intellectual growth, the programs may prepare students for some second-entry professional degree programs, employment in a variety of fields, or advanced entry into an honours program of study in the field.

Normally these programs do not prepare students for direct entry into graduate study. They are typically six to eight semesters in duration (normally 90 to 120 credits, or the equivalent).

This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:

Depth and Breadth of Knowledge
a. A general knowledge and understanding of many key concepts, methodologies, theoretical approaches and assumptions in a discipline;
b. A 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;
c. An ability to gather, review, evaluate and interpret information relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline;
d. Some detailed knowledge in an area of the discipline;
e. Critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline;
f. The ability to apply learning from one or more areas.

Knowledge of Methodologies
An understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to:
a. Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques; and
b. Devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods.

Application of Knowledge

a. The ability to review, present, and interpret quantitative and qualitative information to:
   i. develop lines of argument;
   ii. make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject(s) of study; and
b. The ability to use a basic range of established techniques to:
   i. analyse information;
   ii. evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study;
   iii. propose solutions; and
c. The ability to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.

Communication Skills

The ability to communicate accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences.

Awareness of Limits of Knowledge

An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and how this might influence their analyses and interpretations.

Professional Capacity/Autonomy

a. Qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement and other activities requiring:
   i. the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making;
   ii. working effectively with others;
b. The ability to identify and address their own learning needs in changing circumstances and to select an appropriate program of further study; and
c. Behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE: HONOURS

Bachelor's degree programs in this category are normally designed to require more conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge, and intellectual autonomy than a general bachelor's degree program. Students in honours bachelor's programs learn by doing, with a focus on deepening their mastery of the knowledge and methods of the discipline and/or field. Such programs normally require students to prepare, under supervision, a terminal research paper, thesis, project, exhibition, or other research-based or performance-based exercises that demonstrate methodological competence and capacity for independent intellectual/creative work.

In addition to personal and intellectual growth, **academically-oriented** programs are primarily designed to prepare students for entry into graduate study in the field, second-entry professional degree programs, or employment in a variety of fields, and they usually provide a deeper and broader disciplinary knowledge than an honours bachelor's degree in an applied or

professional area of study. They are typically eight semesters in duration (normally 120 credits, or the equivalent).

A **profession-oriented** honours bachelor's degree is normally designed to require a level of conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge, and intellectual autonomy similar to that in an academically-oriented degree program but with the disciplinary content oriented to a professional field of practice. Students in professional programs learn by doing, with a focus on preparing for entry into a professional field of practice. Such programs incorporate a blend of theory and practice, and normally include a terminal project or other practice-based exercises intended to develop and demonstrate the student's readiness for employment in the professional field of practice. Professions are often practiced within a regulatory framework, and programs may require accreditation by a regulatory body or professional association. In addition to personal and intellectual growth, the programs are primarily designed to prepare students for employment in the field of practice, second-entry professional degree programs, or, depending on the content of the program and the field, entry into either graduate study or bridging studies for an appropriate graduate program. Classroom instruction is typically eight semesters or more in duration (normally 120 credits, or the equivalent) and may be supplemented by required professional experience (e.g., supervised practica or internships).

An honours bachelor's program in an **applied area of study** is normally designed to require a level of conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge, and intellectual autonomy similar to that in an academically-oriented honours program but with the disciplinary content oriented to an occupational field of practice. Students in applied programs learn by doing, with a focus on preparing for entry into an occupational field of practice. Such programs incorporate a blend of theory and practice, and normally include a terminal project or other practice-based exercises intended to develop and demonstrate the student's readiness for employment in the occupational field of practice. In addition to personal and intellectual growth, the programs are primarily designed to prepare students for employment in the field of practice, second-entry professional degree programs, or, depending on the content of the program and the field, entry into either graduate study or bridging studies for an appropriate graduate program. Classroom instruction is typically eight semesters in duration (normally 120 credits, or the equivalent) and may be supplemented by required workplace experience (e.g., two to four supervised co-operative work terms).

This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:

Depth and Breadth of Knowledge
a. 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;
b. A 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;

c. A 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;

d. A developed, detailed knowledge of and experience in research in an area of the discipline;

e. Developed critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline;

f. The ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside the discipline.

Knowledge of Methodologies

An understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to:

a. Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques;

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.

Application of Knowledge

a. The ability to review, present and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative information to:
   i. develop lines of argument;
   ii. make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject(s) of study;
   iii. apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, both within and outside the discipline;
   iv. where appropriate use this knowledge in the creative process; and

b. The ability to use a range of established techniques to:
   i. initiate and undertake critical evaluation of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and information;
   ii. propose solutions;
   iii. frame appropriate questions for the purpose of solving a problem;
   iv. solve a problem or create a new work; and

c. The ability to make critical use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.

Communication Skills

The ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences.

Awareness of Limits of Knowledge

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.

Professional Capacity/Autonomy

a. Qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement and other activities requiring:
   i.   the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility and accountability in both personal and group contexts;
   ii. working effectively with others;
   iii. decision-making in complex contexts;
b. The ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline and to select an appropriate program of further study; and
c. Behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.

GRADUATE DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

Depth and Breadth of Knowledge
   a. Systemic understanding of knowledge, including, where appropriate, relevant knowledge outside the field and/or discipline
   b. Critical awareness of current problems and/ or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the academic discipline

Research and Scholarship
   a. A conceptual understanding and methodological competence that enables a working comprehension of how established techniques of research and inquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge4 in the discipline
   b. enables a critical evaluation of current research and advanced research and scholarship in the discipline or area of professional competence
   c. enables a treatment of complex issues and judgements based on established principles and techniques
   d. has shown at least one of the following:
      i.   the development and support of a sustained argument in written form
      ii. originality in the application of knowledge

Application of Knowledge
A 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

Communication Skills
The ability to communicate ideas, issues and conclusions clearly.

Awareness of the Limits of Knowledge
Cognizance of the complexity of knowledge and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods and disciplines.

Autonomy and Professional Capacity

a. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility and accountability
b. Decision-making in complex situations
c. the intellectual independence required for continuing professional development
d. The ethical behaviour consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research
e. the ability to appreciate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts

Appendix B: Evaluative Criteria for New Degree Programs and Major Modifications and Microcredentials (2.1.2 QAF)

Program Objectives
A. The program is consistent with the vision, special mission, strategic objectives of the university, and with the principles of the Academic Plan. The program fits into the broader array of program offerings, particularly in areas of teaching and research strength.
B. The mission and objectives of the program under review are clear and relate to the pedagogical objectives of the department.
C. The program uses the appropriate degree nomenclature, given the program's stated objectives.

Program requirements
A. The curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study. The program's structure, requirements and program-level learning outcomes are appropriate and align with Algoma University's expression of the University Undergraduate or Graduate Degree Level expectations.
B. The program under review can demonstrate and assess its relation to the standards of any associated regulatory, accrediting body, or professional association (if applicable).
C. The program includes unique program innovations, creative components, or significant high impact practices.

Program requirements for graduate programs only
A. The rationale for the program length is clear and appropriate to ensure that students can complete the program-level learning outcomes and requirements of the proposed time.
B. There is evidence that the program is structured so that each graduate student is required to take a minimum of two-thirds of the course requirements form among graduate-level courses
C. Research-focused graduate programs contain a clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion.

Assessment of teaching and learning
A. Methods for assessing student achievement are appropriate to the program-level learning outcomes and degree-level expectations
B. The program has appropriate plans to monitor and assess:
      i. the overall quality of the program
      ii. whether the program is achieving in practice its proposed objectives

        iii.   whether its students are achieving the program-level learning outcomes

        iv.   how the resulting information will be documented and subsequently used to inform continuous program improvement

C. Completeness of plans for documenting and demonstrating the level of performance of students, consistent with Algoma University's statement of its degree-level expectations (Appendix A).

Admission Requirements

A. The admission requirements are appropriate for the program's objectives and program-level learning outcomes established for completion of the program.

B. Sufficient explanation of alternative requirements for admission, if any, such as minimum grade-point average, degree completion arrangements for college transfer students, additional languages or portfolios, along with how the program recognizes prior work or learning experience.

C. For transfer arrangements and bridge programs proposing more than the standard level of transfer credits, a gap analysis based on learning outcomes has been completed and presented.

Resources

Given the program's planned/ anticipated class sizes and cohorts as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

A. The planned/ anticipated utilization of existing human, physical, and financial resources, and any institutional commitment to supplement these resources, is adequate to deliver the program.

B. The planned faculty hiring schedule is of a sufficient number and quality of core faculty who are competent to teach and/or supervise in and achieve the goals of the program and foster the appropriate academic environment.

C. If required, provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities

D. If applicable, a discussion or explanation of the role and approximate percentage of adjunct and part-time faculty/limited term appointments used in the delivery of the program and the associated plans to ensure the sustainability of the program and quality of the student experience.

E. There are adequate resources to sustain the quality of scholarship produced by students, including library support, information technology support, and laboratory access (if applicable).

F. There is evidence of planning and adequate numbers and quality of: (i) faculty and staff to achieve the goals of the program; or (ii) of plans and the commitment to provide the necessary resources in step with the implementation of the program; (iii) planned/anticipated class sizes; (iv) provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities (if required); and (v) the role of adjunct and part-time faculty.

G. if necessary, additional resource commitments to support the program in step with its ongoing implementation

H. The university has the expertise and resources to support the proposed mode(s) of delivery and to ensure its effectiveness.

Resources for graduate programs only

Given the program's planned/anticipated class sizes and cohorts as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

A. There is evidence that faculty have the research or professional/clinical expertise needed to sustain the program, promote innovation, and foster an appropriate intellectual climate;

B. Where appropriate to the program, there is evidence that financial assistance for students will be sufficient to ensure adequate quality and numbers of students; and

C. There is evidence of how supervisory loads will be distributed, in light of qualifications and appointment status of the faculty.

Quality and other indicators

A. The program provides a learning environment that meets-or-exceeds disciplinary standards and prepares graduates for further study, employment, and community engagement.

B. The proposal defines and uses 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 program).

C. The program structure and research activity of faculty creates an environment that will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience.

Societal Context

A. There is convincing evidence of student demand for the program.

B. The proposal clearly demonstrates how students were engaged in the development process.

C. The program does not directly duplicate that offered by another Ontario university, unless there is evidence of justification of the duplication based on student demand and/or societal need.

D. The proposal presents convincing evidence that graduates of the program are needed in specifically identified fields (academic, public, and/or private sector).

E. For professional programs, the proposal ensures congruence with current regulatory requirements of the profession and demonstrates how the regulatory body was involved in the development process.

Structure

A. The program's structure, requirements and regulations are appropriate to facilitate meeting specified objectives, program-level learning outcomes and degree-level expectations.

B. For programs involving work experience or a placement component, the Department will describe: a) the learning outcomes of the work experience; and, b) the supports the

university will extend to students in order to develop and maintain placement opportunities.

Program Content
    A. A representative program development advisory committee played a central role in ensuring community input to the curriculum and that the curriculum addresses the current and future state of the discipline or area of study.
    B. The program was designed to maximize the graduates' potential for employment and promotion in their field and further study
    C. The ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study are described.
    D. The program includes some unique curriculum, program innovation, or creative component that adds to the strength of the program.
    E. The learning outcomes of the program are developed in a logical and progressive manner through the core and elective course content.

Mode(s) of Delivery
    A. The proposed mode(s) of delivery are appropriate to facilitate students' successful achievement of the intended program learning outcomes and degree-level expectations.

Evaluative Criteria for Microcredentials

Name
- Microcredential name is reflective of the learning outcomes, skills, and competencies acquired (truth in advertising)

Objectives
- The microcredential complements and/or fits into Algoma University's broader array of programming and builds on institutional strengths.

Learning Outcomes
- Outcomes are competency and/or skills focused.
- Outcomes are focused on knowledge application rather than knowledge acquisition.
- Microcredential is built on a learning outcomes framework where performance competencies are aligned with underlying knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Labour Market Driven
- The microcredential fills a distinct labour market need.
- The microcredential was developed in consultation with an external or industry partner.
- Microcredential is endorsed by an external or industry partner.

Assessment
- Summative assessment is reflective of expected job performance in the targeted

industry.
- Evidence of achievement is embedded in the assessment and visible to employers.

Structure
- Duration of the microcredential is 12 weeks in total or less.
- Structure of the microcredential is flexible and meets the access needs of a diverse set of learners.
- Where possible, microcredentials are stackable and transferable to other learning opportunities and/or institutions.
- The microcredential is transcriptable and shareable with employers and/or other institutions

Delivery Method
- The delivery method is appropriate to the intended learning outcomes and allows for maximum flexibility in delivery.

Quality
- Microcredential includes a mechanism for regular feedback from students.
- Quality is assessed through regular review by external partners and/or industry.

Resources
- The proposed utilization of resources of human, physical, and financial resources is well planned and adequate to deliver the resources.

Appendix C: Evaluative Criteria for Existing Programs

Existing programs will be evaluated using the following criteria (QA5.1.3.1):

Program Objectives
 A. Consistency of the program's objectives with the institution's vision, special mission, and strategic objectives of the university, and with the academic principles of the Academic Plan. (QAF 5.1.3.1.1 a)
 B. The program requirements and associated learning outcomes are consistent with Algoma University's expression of the undergraduate or graduate degree-level expectations (Appendix A). (QAF 4.3.1.b)
 C. What are the mission and objectives of the program under review and how do these relate to the pedagogical objectives of the department?
 D. Are the program requirements and program learning outcomes appropriate in relation to the current profile of the discipline or interdisciplinary area, provincially, nationally, and internationally? Include program-related data and measures of performance, including applicable provincial, national and professional standards. How do the program learning outcomes align with Algoma University's expression of the University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UUDLEs) or Graduate Degree Level Expectations (GDLEs)?
 E. What are the standards of any associated regulatory, accrediting body, or professional association (if applicable)? How does the program under review assess itself in relation to these standards (where applicable)?

Program Requirements
 A. Appropriateness of the program's structure and the requirements to meet its objectives and the program-level learning outcomes
 B. Appropriateness of the program's structure, requirements and program-level learning outcomes in meeting the institution's own undergraduate or graduate Degree Level Expectations
 C. Appropriateness and effectiveness of the mode(s) of delivery to facilitate students' successful completion of the program-level learning outcomes
 D. Ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study

Program requirements for graduate programs only
 A. Clear rationale for program length that ensures that students can complete the program-level learning outcomes and requirements within the time required

B. Evidence that each graduate student in the program is required to take a minimum of two-thirds of the course requirements from among graduate level courses
C. For research-focused graduate programs, clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion.

Assessment of teaching and learning
A. Appropriateness and effectiveness of the methods for assessing student achievement of the program-level learning outcomes and degree-level expectations
B. Appropriateness and effectiveness of the plans to monitor and assess:
    i. The overall quality of the program
    ii. whether the program continues to achieve in practice its objectives
    iii. whether its students are achieving the program-level learning outcomes
    iv. how the resulting information will be documented and subsequently used to inform continuous program improvement

Admission requirements
A. The admission requirements are appropriate given the program's objectives and program-level learning outcomes.
B. Sufficient explanation of alternative requirements, if applicable, for admission into a graduate, second-entry or undergraduate programs. e.g., minimum grade point average, additional languages or portfolios, and how the program recognizes prior work or learning experience.

Resources
Given the program's class sizes and cohorts as well as its program-level learning outcomes:
A. Participation of a sufficient number of qualified core faculty who are competent to teach and/or supervise in and achieve the goals of the program and foster the appropriate academic environment;
B. If applicable, discussion/explanation of the role and approximate percentage of adjunct and part-time faculty/limited term appointments used in the delivery of the program and the associated plans to ensure the sustainability of the program and quality of the student experience (see Guidance);
F. If required, provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities;
G. Adequacy of the administrative unit's utilization of existing human, physical and financial resources; and
H. Evidence that there are adequate resources to sustain the quality of scholarship and research activities produced by students, including library support, information technology support, and laboratory access. (QAF 5.1.3.1.6).
    ● Are resources required to maintain and deliver the program available and used effectively?
    ● Is the program adequately resourced with a sufficient number of faculty with appropriate levels of teaching expertise, and of continuing research and publishing activity?

Resources for graduate programs only

Given the program's class sizes and cohorts, as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

    A. Evidence that faculty have the recent research or professional/clinical expertise needed to foster an appropriate intellectual climate, sustain the program, and promote innovation;

    B. Where appropriate to the program, evidence that financial assistance for students is sufficient to ensure adequate quality and numbers of students; and

    C. Evidence of how supervisory loads are distributed, in light of qualifications and appointment status of the faculty (QAF 5.1.3.1.7)

Students

    D. Students have been an integral part of the review process.

    E. The program is designed to maximize the graduates' potential for employment and promotion in their field and further study.

    F. Student experience and student success indicators have been critically analyzed in the assessment of program quality, including applications and registrations; attrition rates; time to completion; final-year academic achievement; graduation rates; academic awards; student in-course reports on teaching; post-graduate employment; and, alumni comments

    G. Faculty input measures have been critically analyzed in the assessment of program quality, including faculty qualifications; research and scholarly records of faculty; class sizes; percentage of students taught by permanent or nonpermanent (sessional) faculty; and, faculty-to-student ratios

    H. The program structure contributes to the quality of the student experience.

    I. Graduate outcomes have been critically analyzed in the assessment of program quality, including employment six months and two years after graduation; postgraduate study; skills match; and, alumni reports

    J. How has student input been used to inform program improvement and development?

    K. Will the program prepare students for future employment with respect to careers for which the program could reasonably be expected to provide preparation?

    L. Analyze indicators of student success in the assessment of program quality (e.g., applications and registrations; retention rates; time-to-completion; final year academic achievement; graduation rates; academic awards; student in-course reports on teaching; post-graduate employment; alumni comments).

    M. Relate faculty input measures to the student experience (e.g., faculty qualifications; research and scholarly records of faculty; class sizes; percentage of courses taught by full-time and part-time faculty; faculty-to-student ratios).

Quality and other indicators

A. Evidence of the quality of the faculty (e.g., qualifications, funding, honours, awards, research, innovation and scholarly record; appropriateness of collective faculty expertise to contribute substantially to the program and commitment to student mentoring);
B. Any other evidence that the program and faculty ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience; and
C. For students: grade-level for admission, scholarly output, success rates in provincial and national scholarships, competitions, awards and commitment to professional and transferable skills, and times-to-completion and retention rates. (QAF 5.1.3.1.8)
D. What initiatives are being taken to enhance the quality of the program and the associated teaching and learning environment?
E. How has the program responded to the concerns and recommendations raised in the previous review? Provide a description of how concerns and recommendations raised in previous reviews have since been addresses, especially those detailed in the Final Assessment Report, Implementation Plan and subsequent monitoring reports from the previous Cyclical Review of the program
F. For a program's first Cyclical Review of a new program, describe any steps taken to address any issue or items flagged in the monitoring report for follow-up and/or report for the first Cyclical Program Review in the Quality Council's approved letter.
G. Where appropriate, address any areas that the program's faculty, staff and/or students have identified as requiring improvement, or as holding promise for enhancement and/or opportunities for curricular change
H. Describe any distinguishing features of the program. Provide evidence of any significant innovation or creativity in the content and/or delivery of the program relative to other such program

Appendix D: Indigenous Learning Outcomes

Indigenous Learning Outcomes were adopted from the Negahneewin Research Centre at Confederation College to serve as a guide for Indigenous curriculum development.

Outcome	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
1. Relate principles of Indigenous knowledge to career field	• Cosmos/Creation stories • Decision-making by consensus • *Pimatisiwin* principles • Justice • Traditional dispute resolution • Traditional medicines	1.1. Examine the key elements of North American Indigenous and Western worldviews 1.2. Investigate Indigenous approaches to decision making 1.3. Compare Indigenous and Euro-Canadian approaches to justice 1.4. Examine traditional approaches to health and wellness 1.5. Relate principles of Indigenous knowledge to community wellness	• Appreciate the importance of historical context • Recognize and respect people's diversity • Openness to individual differences • Be socially responsible and contribute to your community • Willingness to learn • Values lifelong learning
2. Analyze the impact of colonialism on Indigenous communities	• Post-colonial theory and decolonization • Marginalization and dispossession of Indigenous communities • Residential school experiences • Agricultural displacement of Indigenous farming families • Self-determination principles	2.1. Contrast perceptions of colonialism 2.2. Relate colonial policies to contemporary Indigenous contexts 2.3. Analyze examples of assimilationist policies in relation to Indigenous families 2.4. Analyze contemporary assertions of Indigenous sovereignty, self-determination and sustainability	• Appreciate the importance of historical context • Recognize and respect people's diversity • Openness to individual differences • Be socially responsible and contribute to your community • Willingness to learn • Values lifelong learning
3. Explain the relationship between land and identity within Indigenous societies	• Principle of responsibility among Indigenous societies • The Anishinaabe Seven Grandfather Teachings • Connection between land and identity	3.1. Apply concepts of responsibility to community development 3.2. Create a code of ethics based on the Anishinaabe Seven Grandfather Teachings 3.3. Relate examples of oral tradition of Indigenous people in relation to the land 3.4. Investigate the significance of traditional ecological knowledge	• Appreciate the importance of historical context • Recognize and respect people's diversity • Openness to individual difference • Be socially responsible and contribute to your community • Willingness to learn • Values lifelong learning

4. Compare Indigenous and Canadian perceptions of inclusion and diversity	• Demographics: local, regional, provincial, national • Indigenous views of inclusion • Colonialism, settler governments and immigration • Multiculturalism in Canada • Social change	4.1. Examine inclusion and diversity from an Indigenous perspective 4.2. Analyze Canadian perceptions of inclusion and diversity 4.3. Explain the effect of Canada's multicultural policies on Indigenous people 4.4. Examine theories of social change	• Appreciate the importance of historical context • Recognize and respect people's diversity • Openness to individual differences • Be socially responsible and contribute to your community • Willingness to learn • Values lifelong learning
5. Analyze racism in relation to Indigenous peoples	• Government legislation • Constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples • The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* • Representation and the media • The meaning of privilege	5.1. Investigate the concept of racism 5.2. Analyze legislation and government policies related to racism 5.3. Examine current and historical examples of racism in relation to Indigenous peoples 5.4 Examine common misrepresentations of Indigenous people 5.5. Analyze the concept of privilege	• Appreciate the importance of historical context • Recognize and respect people's diversity • Openness to individual differences • Be socially responsible and contribute to your community • Willingness to learn • Values lifelong learning
6. Generate strategies for reconciling Indigenous and Canadian relations	• Political discourse between Indigenous people and various levels of government • Political advocacy by Indigenous leaders and communities • Truth and Reconciliation Commission • Approaches to Indigenous community development and partnerships	6.1. Describe current formalized approaches to reconciliation 6.2. Analyze the effects of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 6.3. Distinguish between self-determination and self-governance 6.4. Formulate strategies towards the reconciliation of Indigenous and Canadian relations	• Appreciate the importance of historical context • Recognize and respect people's diversity • Openness to individual differences • Be socially responsible and contribute to your community • Willingness to learn • Values lifelong learning
7. Formulate approaches for engaging Indigenous community partners	• Indigenous community organizations • Ethical approach to working with Indigenous communities • Individual and community needs • Alternative approaches that reflect community development principles	7.1. Examine local community organizations and resources 7.2. Analyze Indigenous community partnerships 7.3. Examine approaches for working with Indigenous communities 7.4. Prepare a principled approach to working with Indigenous partners	• Appreciate the importance of historical context • Recognize and respect people's diversity • Openness to individual differences • Be socially responsible and contribute to your community • Willingness to learn • Values lifelong learning

Appendix E: Program Review Schedule 2017/18-2028/29

Program Review Schedule
2017/2018-2028/29

Academic Program	Timetable for Review	Last Completed Review
CESD *multiple sites	2017/18	2009/10
Law and Justice	2017/18	2010/11
Political Science	2017/18	2010/11
Anishinaabemowin	2018/19	2011/12
History	2018/19	2011/12
Social Work *multiple sites	2018/19	2013/14
Computer Science *multiple sites	2019/20	2012/13
Biology	2019/20	2012/13
Visual Arts	2020/21	2013/14
Geography	2021/22	2014/15
Business Administration *multiple sites*	2021/22	2014/15
Economics *multiple sites	2021/22	2014/15
Psychology * multiple sites	2022/23	2015/16
English	2023/24	2016/17
Sociology	2023/24	2016/17
Music	2023/24	2016/17
CESD *multiple sites	2023-24	2016-17
Environmental Science	2024-25	N/A
Law and Justice	2024-25	2017-18
Political Science	2024-25	2017-18
Anishinaabe Studies	2025-26	N/A
Anishinaabemowin	2025-26	2018/19
History	2025-26	2018/19

Social Work *multiple sites	2025-26	2018/19
Computer Science *Multiple Sites	2026-27	2019/20
Biology	2026-27	2019/20
Visual Arts	2027-28	2020/21
Geography	2028-29	2021/22
Business Administration *multiple sites	2028-29	2021/22
Economics *multiple sites	2028-29	2021/22

Appendix F: Definitions

Academic Services: Academic Services are defined as those services integral to a student's ability to achieve the program-level learning outcomes. Such services would typically include, but are not limited to: academic advising and counseling appropriate to the program; information technology, library and laboratory resources directed towards the program; and internship, co-operative education and practicum placement services, where these experiential components are a required part of a program. Excluded from Academic Services are items such as intramural and extramural activities, residence services, food services, health and wellness services, psychological services, financial aid services and career services, except where any of these services are specifically identified to be an integral part of the academic program.

Arm's Length: For the purposes of this policy, a reviewer will be considered to be at arm's length if they are external to the program under review and the University and their role in a review will not influence university operations or business decisions in ways that could result in a personal, financial benefit to any university employee or with whom the reviewer has a personal or commercial relationship. Please refer to Algoma University's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) for External Program Consultants.

Certificate (Undergraduate): An undergraduate certificate is a structured set of 30 credits of undergraduate level academic content in a particular discipline or area of study that introduces students to, or extends their knowledge of, that discipline or area of study. It is a short form credential that forms a coherent program of study organized around a clear set of learning outcomes. Undergraduate certificates comprise undergraduate level academic content normally equivalent to a minimum of half a year of full-time study.

An undergraduate certificate is a stand-alone credential that may be taken concurrently with a bachelor's program or independently. It normally comprises a structured set of sequential year-level courses and does not require completion of a post-secondary credential for admission.

Graduate Certificate: a structured set of 30 or 60 credits in a particular discipline or area of study that introduces a student to, or extends their knowledge of, that discipline or area of study. A graduate certificate is a stand-alone credential comprising undergraduate courses that are taken independently from a bachelor's program. It is normally a structured set of sequential year-level courses and requires a post-secondary credential for admission.

Degree: An academic credential awarded upon successful completion of a prescribed set and sequence of requirements at a specified standard of performance consistent with the OCAV's Degree Level Expectations and the university's own expression of those Expectations and achievement of the degree's associated learning outcomes.

Degree Level Expectations: These are academic standards that identify the knowledge and skill outcome competencies that should be achieved by those earning a degree. These standards reflect progressive levels of intellectual and creative development, as established by OCAV. The Degree Level Expectations detailed in Appendix 2 of the QAF are the Quality Assurance Framework's link to the OQF. Degree Level Expectations may be expressed in subject-specific or in generic terms. Graduates at specified degree levels (e.g., BA, MSc) are expected to demonstrate these competencies. Each university has undertaken to adapt and describe the degree-level expectations that will apply within its own institution. Likewise, academic units describe the university's expectations in terms appropriate to their academic programs. Further information, together with examples for successive degree levels, is provided in Guidance (of the QAF).

Diploma Program: A diploma program is a complete set and sequence of courses, combinations of courses and/or other units of study prescribed by a university for the fulfillment of the requirements for each particular for-credit or not-for-credit undergraduate and graduate diploma. Not-for-credit and for-credit undergraduate or postgraduate diploma programs are not subject to approval or audit by the Quality Council. The Quality Council recognizes only three types or categories of Graduate Diploma (see definitions below and Guidance), with specific appraisal conditions (and an associated submission template) applying to each. In each case, when proposing a new graduate diploma, Algoma University may request an Expedited Approval Process (see definition below). All such programs, once approved, will be subject to the normal cycle of program reviews, typically in conjunction with the related degree program.

Type 1: Awarded when a candidate admitted to a master's program leaves the program after completing a prescribed proportion of the requirements. Students are not admitted directly to these programs. When new, these programs require approval through the university's Protocol for Major Modification (Program Renewal and Significant Change) prior to their adoption. Once approved, they will be incorporated into the university's schedule for cyclical reviews as part of the parent program.

Type 2: Offered in conjunction with a master's or doctoral degree, the admission to which requires that the candidate be already admitted to the master's or doctoral program. This represents an additional, usually interdisciplinary, qualification. When new, these programs require submission to the Quality Council for an Expedited Approval (no external reviewers required) prior to their adoption. Once approved, they will be incorporated into the university's schedule for cyclical reviews as part of the parent program.

Type 3: A stand-alone, direct-entry program, generally developed by a unit already offering a related master's or doctoral degree, and designed to meet the needs of a particular clientele or market. Where the program has been conceived and developed as a distinct and original entity, the university will use the Expedited Approval (see below). Although the Expedited Approval protocol does not involve external reviewers, new Type 3 GDips are to be included in the Schedule for Cyclical Reviews and will be subject to external review during the CPR process

Expedited Approval
Generally, approvals are granted in a shorter time span with less required documentation. The Expedited Protocol requires the submission to the Quality Council of a Proposal Brief of the proposed program change/new program (Type 2 or 3 Graduate Diplomas) and the rationale for it. Only the applicable criteria outlined in Quality Assurance Framework Part Two Section 2.1 will be applied to the proposal. The process is further expedited by not requiring the use of external reviewers; hence Framework Part two Section 2.2 does not apply. Furthermore, the Council's appraisal and approval processes are reduced. (See Quality Assurance Framework Section 3). The outcomes of these submissions will be conveyed to the proposing university directly by the Quality Assurance Secretariat and reported to the Quality Council.

Honours Diploma: An honours diploma is a distinct type of for-credit diploma program that is taken by students who wish to upgrade from a 3-year degree program. It consists of a structured set of 30 credits comprising the year four honours requirements of a degree program. An honours diploma is a stand-alone credential with criteria for admission to be completed consecutively by students who have previously graduated from a general degree program in the same area of study. The honours diploma is available in select program areas for which the university has an approved honours degree.

Inter-Institutional Program Categories:

1. Conjoint Degree Program: A program of study, offered by a postsecondary institution that is affiliated, federated or collaborating with a university, which is approved by the university's Senate or equivalent body, and for which a single degree document signed by both institutions is awarded.
2. Dual Credential/Degree Program: A program of study offered by two or more universities or by a university and a college or institute, including Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning, in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a separate and different degree/diploma document being awarded by each of the participating institutions.
3. Joint Degree Program: A program of study offered by two or more universities or by a university and a college or institute, including an Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a single degree document. (See Guidance)

For Inter-Institutional Programs, the Protocol for New Program Approvals or the Protocol for Major Modifications (Significant Change and Program Renewal) will be used, as appropriate.

For existing inter-institutional programs in which all partners are institutions within Ontario, the Quality Council's Cyclical Program Review Processes will apply to all elements of those programs as offered by all partner institutions involved (including, e.g., Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology and Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning). For joint programs in which some partners are institutions outside Ontario, the elements of the programs contributed by the out-of-province partner will be subject to the quality assurance

processes in their respective jurisdictions, but must also satisfy the corresponding requirements of the QAF. The Quality Council will verify that the post-secondary assurance process of an out-of-province partner is recognized and accepted as being comparable to our own. In cases where out-of-province processes are deemed to be insufficiently comparable to the requirements of the QAF, the Quality Council will determine the appropriate action to be taken on quality assurance if the collaboration is to be permitted to proceed **.**

Major: An identified set and/or 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 (e.g., Bachelor of Arts in Geography where *Geography* is the major).

Microcredential: A designation of achievement of a coherent set of skills and knowledge, specified by a statement of purpose, learning outcomes, and strong evidence of need by industry, employers, and/or the community. They have fewer requirements and are of shorter duration than a qualification and focus on learning outcomes that are distinct from diploma/degree programs. While requiring recognition in the IQAP, proposals for the introduction or modification of a micro-credential do not require reference to the Quality Council unless they are part of a New Program.

A microcredential is a distinct type of stand-alone credential that is focused on a narrow range of skills and competencies, is labour-market driven, and is designed for maximum flexibility. A microcredential is shorter in duration than a degree or certificate program, and has specified learning outcomes that are distinct from degree and certificate programs. A microcredential is transcriptable, trackable, and shareable with employers or other educational institutions.

Additional characteristics of a microcredential include:

- Focused on knowledge application rather than knowledge acquisition
- Accessible and flexible to meet the needs of diverse learner populations
- Tuition falls outside of the Ontario tuition framework and is determined by the university on the basis of an analysis of cost and projected revenue
- Quality is primarily assessed through peer and industry or external partner review
- Some microcredentials are "one-off" learning experiences while others are modules that can be stacked to create a qualification

12 weeks or less in total based on hours of study (note: some microcredentials are set up as flexible offerings on weekends or part time over several months to accommodate diverse learners).

Minor: An identified set and/or sequence of courses in a discipline or field that either introduces or extends knowledge of that discipline or field. Minors are only available to registered Algoma University students and are available only to students who have declared a

major in another discipline. Minors are to be completed concurrently with a degree program on an optional basis and are recorded on the graduate's academic record.

Modes of Delivery: The means or medium used in delivering a program (e.g., lecture format, distance, online, synchronous/asynchronous, hybrid problem-based, compressed part-time, multi-campus, inter-institutional collaboration or other non-standard form of delivery).

The modes of delivery described below are the most common options in use at Algoma University:

1. Synchronous Instruction
   a. **In-Person Instruction**: class that meets in a classroom and/or laboratory at the scheduled time/day, with the instructor and all students present (synchronous).
   b. **Hybrid Instruction** (also called "HyFlex"): The instructor is present in the classroom at the scheduled time/day, with students present who wish to attend in person, and students who prefer not to attend in person participating remotely at the same time (synchronous). The student makes the choice for any given class and can switch as needed. Requires additional support for content preparation, technology and class management (advance budget approval required).
   c. **Technologically assisted instruction** (TAI): Courses that were developed and designed to be taught in a classroom with the faculty member and the students present in a face-to-face setting, but which are instead delivered remotely, with the assistance of technology, due to exceptional or emergency situations. TAI courses are scheduled for specific timetable slots (synchronous).

2. **Synchronous + Asynchronous Instruction**
   a. **Alternating In-Person/Remote Instruction**: The instructor is present in the classroom at the scheduled time/day with some proportion of students attending class in person (synchronous), while the rest participate remotely and/or complete self-directed learning, including but not limited to activities such as sustained reading, completing assignments, watching recorded lectures on their own schedule (asynchronous).
   b. **Remote Synchronous/Asynchronous Instruction**: The instructor teaches using meeting technology (e.g. Zoom, Google Meet) at a scheduled time (from a classroom or other location), with students attending and participating remotely only. Students will complete some of the learning objectives via asynchronous means, including completing additional readings, videos and/or assignments and/or viewing pre-recorded lectures.

3. **Asynchronous Instruction (Distance Education)**
   a. **Online Instruction**: The course materials - lectures, videos, assignments, assessments, discussion boards, etc. - are prepared prior to course delivery, and which students complete on a more flexible schedule (asynchronous). Delivered on an LMS (e.g., Brightspace, Moodle, etc.).

New (Proposed) Program: Any degree program, currently approved by the Senate, but not yet approved by the Quality Council. A change of name, only, does not constitute a new program; nor does the inclusion of a new program of specialization where another with the same designation already exists (e.g., a new honours program where a major with the same designation already exists). A 'new program' is brand-new: that is to say, the program has substantially different program objectives, program requirements and program-level learning outcomes from those of any existing approved programs offered at Algoma University.

Program: The complete set and sequence of courses, combination of courses and/or other units of study, research and practice prescribed by an institution for the fulfillment of the requirements for each particular degree.

Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes
Clear and concise statements that describe what successful students should have achieved and the knowledge, skills, and abilities that they should have acquired upon completion of the program. Program-level student learning outcomes emphasize the application and integration of knowledge –both in the context of the program and more broadly –rather than coverage of material; make explicit the expectations for student success; are measurable and thus form the criteria for assessment/evaluation; and are written in greater detail than the program objectives. Clear and concise program-level learning outcomes also help to create shared expectations between students and instructors.

Program Objectives
Clear and concise statements that describe the goals of the program. Program objectives explain the potential applications of the knowledge and skills acquired in the program; seek to help students connect learning across various contexts; situate the particular program in the context of the discipline as a whole; and are often broader in scope than the program-level learning outcomes that they help to generate.

Program of Specialization (e.g. ,a major, honours program, concentration or similar designation)
An identified set and sequence of courses and/or other units of study, research and practice within an area of disciplinary or interdisciplinary study, completed in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree, and which is recorded on the graduate's academic record.
It should be noted that:
  A. A program constitutes complete fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree when the program and degree program are one and the same
  B. A program constitutes "partial" fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree when the program is a subset of the degree program. Typically, a bachelor's degree requires the completion of a program of specialization, often referred to as a major, an honours program, a concentration or similar designation

Program Revision

Program Revisions at Algoma University can be classified as either a minor modification, major modification, or substantial major modification.

Minor Modifications: A minor modification is defined as a small change to a program that does not change the fundamental nature, purpose, or the learning outcomes of the program. Multiple minor modifications over a period of less than three years that amount to equal to or greater than 33% of the program, will require the program to complete a substantial major modification. Minor modifications include, but are not limited to:
   a) changes to the mode of delivery for a small number of courses
   b) minor modifications to courses such as changes to course descriptions or course prerequisites
   c) the addition of a small number of new courses
   d) changes to an existing Emphasis, Option, or Minor Program
   e) the creation of a new micro-credential(s); undergraduate certificate(s); and laddering, stacking or similar options, or comparable elements that do not require Quality Council appraisal and approval.

Major Modifications: The Quality Council defines a major modification as one or more of the following:
   a) Requirements that differ significantly from those existing at the time of the previous Cyclical Program Review
   b) Significant changes to the program-level learning outcomes that do not, however, meet the threshold of a new program
   c) Significant changes to the program's delivery, including to the program's faculty 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 and/or online / hybrid delivery – see below)
   d) Addition or deletion of streams
   e) Change in program name and/or degree nomenclature, when this results in a change in learning outcomes; and/or
   f) Addition of a single new field to an existing graduate program. Departments are not required to declare fields for either master's or doctoral programs. Note also that the creation of more than one field at one point in time or over subsequent years may need to go through the Expedited Protocol.

   Algoma University has expanded the above definition to further clarify its internal definition of what constitutes a major modification by providing examples for each of the categories.

   A major modification to a program of study is a "significant change" in the program requirements, intended learning outcomes, and/or human and other resources associated with it. Examples of major modifications include:

- Change to the admission, promotion, and graduation requirements for the program where the change has an impact on the learning outcomes of the program
- New bridging options for college diploma graduates
- Change to the length of the program
- Introduction or deletion of a thesis or capstone project
- The introduction or deletion of a work experience requirement, including internships, coop options and practicums
- Introduction or deletion of breadth requirements
- Changes to the faculty delivering the program: e.g., a large proportion of the faculty retires or new hires alter the areas of research and teaching interests
- Change to full- or part-time program options, or vice versa
- Changes to the essential resources, where these changes impair the delivery of the approved program

When changing the mode of delivery of a program to online for all or a significant portion of a program that was previously delivered in-person, the program may consider the following criteria:
- Maintenance of and/or changes to the program objectives and program-level learning outcomes
- Adequacy of the technological platform and tools
- Sufficiency of support services and training for teaching staff
- Sufficiency and type of support for students in the new learning environment
- Access to course material

Substantial Major Modification: The following major modifications are normally categorized as substantial:
- the merger of two or more programs
- major changes to courses comprising a significant proportion of the program (33% or greater)
- change in language of program delivery
- the deletion or addition of a specialization, major or minor
- the closure or suspension of an undergraduate program, major, minor, or certificate
- change in the mode of delivery such that a majority of required course credits in the program will be delivered using the new mode(s) (33% or greater)
- the establishment of an existing degree program at another institution or location.

All other major modifications are normally categorized as standard.

Specialization: A specialization is a defined set of courses which provides students with specific expertise, knowledge, and/or practice and so further distinguishes the program in a recognizable way. Successful completion of a specialization is recorded on the transcript. A specialization is available only to students majoring in the discipline in which the specialization is offered (e.g., a student majoring in Business Administration may enroll in a specialization in Human Resources to further their expertise in a specialty area). Specializations cannot be

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added to three year programs, since 1) three year programs, by their nature, provide a general education of the disciplinary area, and 2) there are not enough course choices in a three year program to accommodate a specialization in addition to the general topic elements.

Stream: A stream is a sequence of courses in a program that guides the student's studies based on area(s) of interest but does not result in a designation on a diploma or other formal recognition.

Virtual Site Visit: The practice of conducting all required elements of the external reviewers' site visit using videoconferencing software and/or other suitable platforms. A virtual site visit will still include elements such as virtual meetings with students, faculty, and other stakeholders. It may also include remote attendance at performances or events, and virtual facilities tours. A virtual site visit may replace an in-person site visit for certain undergraduate and master's programs, with agreement from both the external reviewers and the CAO or designate.

Appendix G Quick Reference to Algoma University Program Components and Stand-Alone Credentials

Abbreviated Definitions with Examples for Program Components

Program Component	Example
Degree Program The complete set and sequence of courses, combination of courses and/or other units of study, research and practice prescribed by an institution for the fulfillment of the requirements for a particular degree.	Bachelor of Arts
Major An identified set and/or sequence of courses, and/or other units of 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.	Bachelor of Arts in *Geography* where Geography is the major.
Specialization A specialization is a defined set of courses which provides students with a specific expertise, knowledge, and/or practice and so further distinguishes the program in a recognizable way.	Bachelor of Computer Science with a specialization in ***Computer Game Technology & Creative Arts***
Minor An identified set and/or sequence of courses in a discipline or field that either introduces or extends knowledge of that discipline or field.	Bachelor of Arts in Geography with a minor in ***Law and Justice***
Stream A stream is an ordered collection of courses in a program that guides a student's study based on area(s) of interest but does not result in a designation on a diploma or other formal recognition.	Students majoring in Music can choose Music courses from lists organized according to area of interest e.g., Music history and appreciation, Music theory, Music pedagogy and practical musicianship, and Music performance.
Certificate A structured set of 30 credits in a particular discipline or area of study that introduces students to, or extends their knowledge of, that discipline or area of study.	Certificate in Community Economic and Social Development

Honours Diploma An honours diploma is a distinct type of for-credit diploma program that consists of a structured set of 30 credits comprising the year four honours requirements of a degree program. An honours diploma is a stand-alone credential with criteria for admission to be completed consecutively by students who have previously graduated from a general degree program in the same area of study. The honours diploma is available in select program areas for which the university has an approved honours degree.	Students who have graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biology can apply and be admitted to an ***Honours Diploma in Biology***. This student would be enrolled in the same courses as a student in the fourth year of the Honours Bachelor of Science in Biology.
Microcredential A microcredential is a distinct type of stand-alone credential that is focused on a narrow range of skills and competencies, is labour-market driven, and is designed for maximum flexibility. A for-credit microcredential is shorter in duration than a degree or certificate program, and has specified learning outcomes that are distinct from degree and certificate programs. A microcredential is transcriptable, trackable, and shareable with employers or other educational institutions.	
Graduate Certificate A structured set of 30 or 60 credits in a particular discipline or area of study that introduces a student to, or extends their knowledge of, that discipline or area of study. A graduate certificate is a stand-alone for-credit credential comprising undergraduate courses that are taken independently from a bachelor's program. It normally comprises a structured set of sequential year-level courses and requires a post-secondary credential for admission.	Graduate Certificate in Information Technology