

External Review Overview

We are grateful you agreed to serve as a member of the External Review Panel for the review and assessment of the [insert program].

The insights and guidance of External Reviewers play a fundamental role in action planning for program review and the involvement of external, arm's-length consultants is an essential part of the university's quality review and improvement process.

The External Review Panel consists of three external disciplinary and, where appropriate, industry experts for degree programs; and, two external disciplinary and industry experts for certificate and diploma programs.

Role of External Reviewers

The role of the External Reviewers is to advise the program and the university on the strengths and opportunities for the program relative to market demand, curriculum, pedagogy, student achievement, program administration, resource use, and the alignment of the program to the university's mission, vision, and strategic priorities.

As a member of the External Review Panel, you will:

- Review and assess the program's Self-Study Report as submitted by the department.
Note: at least four weeks in advance of the site visit, the External Reviewers will receive the program's Self-Study Report and supporting documentation.
- Participate in a site visit with the program to gain further insight into program operations, and to directly interview program faculty, staff, students, and other key stakeholders.
- Participate in a discussion with other panel members about the Self-Study Report and findings from the site visit.
- Submit a confidential External Reviewer Report detailing recommendations and commendations for program improvement. On the second day of the site visit, the External Reviewers are given time to work together on the External Reviewer Report (see attached [External Reviewer Report template](#)). Typically, External Reviewers will have an additional three weeks to finalize the External Reviewer Report and submit it to the university.
- Avoid any conflict of interest that might impair or impugn the independence, integrity, or impartiality of the Panel. We ask that you approach the review with a broad outlook and open mind.
- Treat as confidential all information and material to which you are given access, or which is acquired, before, as well as after, the review is complete.

Sample Site Visit Agenda

While on-site, the external reviewers will meet with students, graduates, faculty, administration, and other key stakeholders, as appropriate. A site visit agenda is developed well ahead of the visit to ensure that the maximum benefit is derived from the visit. Time will be scheduled for the external reviewers to discuss their findings, prepare for their exit Interview with the Dean, and start writing their External Reviewer Report. Below is a sample of a typical external review site visit schedule.

Activity	Description	Start	End
Day 1			
Meet with Associate Vice President Academic and Quality Assurance Officer	Set stage for the Review (highlight importance of continuous quality improvement and set boundaries for the review). This is also an opportunity for Reviewer(s) to ask questions and clarify issues that may appear in the preparatory documents.	9:00am	09:30am
Meet with Faculty	Discuss strengths and areas of concern of the Program. Identify opportunities for improvement and challenges to the further success of the program	9:30am	11:00am
Break and debrief	15 minutes	11:00am	11:15am
Meet with the Dean	Discuss issues that cross between the academic and administrative process of delivering a program (i.e., funding, research, and planning for the Program).	11:15am	12:15pm
Break and debrief	15 minutes	12:15pm	12:30pm
Lunch	This is an informal, collegial gathering with a group of program representatives.	12:30pm	1:15pm
Meet with Students	Discuss students' experiences in the program, including program strengths and areas for improvement.	1:15pm	2:15pm
Break and debrief	15 minutes	2:15pm	2:30pm
Meet with Program Graduates	Discuss graduates' experiences in the program, including program strengths and areas for improvement, and impact on graduates' personal and/or professional aspirations.	2:30pm	3:30pm
Break and debrief	15 minutes	3:30pm	3:45pm
Program Tour by Program Chair <i>(if required)</i>	Especially valuable for those programs with specialized equipment/facilities.	3:45pm	4:15pm
Meet with Associate Vice President Research and Graduate Studies <i>(graduate programs only)</i>	Discuss issues specific to graduate studies.	4:15	5:00pm
Optional: Dinner	This is an informal, collegial gathering with a group of program representatives.	5:00pm	7:00pm

Activity	Description	Start	End
Day 2			
Preparation time for Reviewers prior to the Exit Interview	A time for the Reviewer to organize notes and thoughts regarding the Exit Interview. Also, this a time for the Reviewer to ask for more information about any particular issue or concern.	9:00am	10:00am
Exit Interview with AVP Academic, Dean of the School/Faculty, and Department Chair	Reviewer highlights preliminary Commendations. Identifies some preliminary Recommendations and discusses these recommendations for clarification. Reviewer makes additional suggestions for improving the Program. Reviewer(s) asks questions and clarify issues. Reviewer identifies an expected delivery date of written report.	10:00am	11:00am
Meet with Quality Assurance Officer to discuss "Next Steps"	Opportunity to discuss report format, timelines, and for the Reviewer to request additional information.	11:00am	11:30am

Travel and Accommodations

It is expected that External Reviewers will arrange their own travel and accommodations, including transportation to and from the University. Below are a few recommendations to help with your planning.

Airport and Transportation Options	
[insert details about nearest airport]	
[insert details about taxi service and car rentals]	
Suggested Hotel Options	
[insert first hotel recommendation]	[insert second hotel recommendation]
Options for Eating Out	
[insert listing of local restaurants near hotels]	

Maps

[insert map of city]

[insert map of university campus]

Reimbursement

Panel members will be reimbursed for the following:

- Up to a maximum of three nights' accommodation for site visits that span two days.
- Up to a maximum of three days' meals, as per TRU's per diem and meal allowance guidelines. Please note that the university will not accept claims for alcoholic beverages.
- Up to a maximum of \$350 (\$0.50 per km) for mileage; or economy air travel costs and taxi services, as appropriate.

External Reviewers need to provide original receipts to substantiate their travel claim. Please submit all receipts associated with the external review to the Curriculum Governance Officer.

Note, travel and accommodation costs are borne by the Faculty/School of the program under review.

Next Steps

Approximately four weeks before the scheduled site visit, you will receive the Program Self-Study Report and Site Visit Agenda.

We hope the above information will be helpful to you as you prepare for the External Review. Should you require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Quality Assurance.

We look forward to your arrival!