

Organization Review Panel Report Guidelines

Organization Review for
NAME OF PRIVATE INSTITUTION proposing to offer a
Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree:

PROPOSAL/PROGRAM: Bachelor of Interior Design

Preface

In Ontario, organizations that wish to offer degree programs or part of a program leading to a degree (that either have limited or no legislative authority to do so) must request the consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. The Minister, in turn, refers the program proposal to the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) for its recommendation on the quality of the proposed program. The Board seeks expert advice from qualified academics and professionals on the quality of the proposed program and the applicant's capacity to deliver the program. For each application, the Board appoints a quality assessment panel (QAP), including a panel chair to conduct the review and assess the program/proposal against the Board's relevant standards and benchmarks.

Private applicants are subjected to both an organization review and a program review. During the organization review, which occurs prior to the program review, the organization review panel (ORP) assesses the applicant's organizational character, financial viability and student protection policies and practices against the Board's standards. If the organization review results in a negative finding, the Board may decide not to proceed with a Program Quality Assessment and forward its recommendation to the Minister.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL INSERTED HERE: i.e., Private Institution A, has applied to offer a Bachelor of X program.

Guidelines for your Review

THIS SECTION OUTLINES THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE QUALITY ASSESSMENT PANEL AND ANY SPECIAL INSTRUCTION IDENTIFIED BY THE BOARD FOR THE REVIEW.

Assessment against Standards and Benchmarks

The Board has eight standards relevant to the Organization Review:

1. Mission Statement and Academic Goals
2. Administrative Capacity
3. Ethical Conduct
4. Academic Freedom and Integrity
5. Student Protection
6. Financial Stability
7. Dispute Resolution
8. Organization Evaluation

Each standard has several benchmarks that demonstrate the applicant's performance against the standard.

Definitions of Assessment Categories

When assessing the proposal against the Board's benchmarks, you're asked to indicate whether the applicant **meets or exceeds the Board's benchmark** (this aspect of the proposal meets or exceeds the threshold set by the Board in the benchmark) or **does not meet the Board's benchmark** (this aspect of the proposal does not meet the threshold set by the Board in the benchmark).

In the case that the benchmark is not met, the Board requires your guidance about whether the revisions required to meet the threshold set by the Board in the benchmark are **major** (required revisions to meet the Board’s benchmark are substantial, would take significant time and/or resources to rectify, and/or should be re-assessed before being implemented) or **minor** (required revisions to meet the benchmark are relatively minor, the institution has the capacity to implement them, and they do not require reassessment prior to implementation).

For each benchmark, please indicate whether the applicant

- Meets or exceeds the benchmark (check “Y”); or
- Does not meet the benchmark (check “N”).

Where an aspect of the proposal does not meet the benchmark, characterize, in the space provided, whether a) you consider the revisions required to meet the Board’s threshold to be major or minor (based on the definitions provided above), b) the nature of the revision(s) that will be required to meet the threshold, and c) the reasons for your judgements.

Note any commitments made by the applicant during the review that were critical to your judgements.

Please return the final report to the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board in electronic format and send a signed version of the report to:

Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board

900 Bay Street
23rd Floor, Mowat Block
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2
Telephone: 416-212-1230

Quality Assessment Panel Guidelines

1. MISSION STATEMENT AND ACADEMIC GOALS STANDARD

Standard:

The governing body has approved a mission statement and academic goals that identify the academic character and aspirations of the organization, including the extent to which the applicant is committed to the dissemination of knowledge through teaching and, where applicable, the creation of knowledge and service to the community or related professions.

Benchmarks:	Meets or exceeds the benchmark (Y/N)?¹	If no: comment on a) whether the required revisions are major or minor ² ; b) the nature of the revisions required; c) the reasons for your judgements; and d) any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements. If yes: detail any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.
1. The organization has a clear, consistent and well-articulated statement of mission and academic goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
2. Programs are clearly related to the applicant’s mission and academic goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
3. Resources are used to advance the mission.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
4. Policies support the mission.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

¹ Indicate whether the Applicant

- Meets or exceeds the benchmark (check “Y” for “yes”); or
- Does not meet the benchmark (check “N” for “no”).

² **Major:** Required revisions to meet the threshold are substantial, would take significant time and/or resources to rectify, and/or should be re-assessed before being implemented.

Minor: Required revisions to meet the threshold are relatively minor, the institution has the capacity to implement them, and they do not require reassessment prior to implementation.

1. The organization:
 - Meets or exceeds the Board's standard
 - Does not meet the Board's standard
2. Identify, for this standard:
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Major weaknesses
 - c. Minor weaknesses
3. Was the information provided in the submission combined with any additional information sought from the organization sufficient, reliable, and valid for the purposes of this review?
 - Yes
 - No (if no, please comment)

SAMPLE

2. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY STANDARD

Standard:

The applicant has the legal characteristics, governance structure and administrative capacity necessary to organize and manage a competent institution of higher learning.

<p>Benchmarks:</p>	<p>Meets or exceeds the benchmark (Y/N)?³</p>	<p>If no: comment on <i>e) whether the required revisions are major or minor⁴;</i> <i>f) the nature of the revisions required;</i> <i>g) the reasons for your judgements; and</i> <i>h) any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.</i></p> <p>If yes: detail any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.</p>
<p>1. The applicant’s legal status is appropriate for its goals.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N</p>	
<p>2. The organization has an appropriate governance structure, such as a legally constituted governing body that is responsible for managing the assets of the organization; maintaining the purpose, viability and integrity of the institution. Achieving institutional policies and goals; selecting administrative leadership and providing the appropriate physical, fiscal and human resources.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N</p>	
<p>3. The organization’s reporting structure clearly indicates the relationship between the owners and the governing and managing bodies.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N</p>	
<p>4. Governance and decision-making structures are clear, effective and</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N</p>	

³ Indicate whether the Applicant

- Meets or exceeds the benchmark (check “Y” for “yes”); or
- Does not meet the benchmark (check “N” for “no”).

⁴ Major: Required revisions to meet the threshold are substantial, would take significant time and/or resources to rectify, and/or should be re-assessed before being implemented.

Minor: Required revisions to meet the threshold are relatively minor, the institution has the capacity to implement them, and they do not require reassessment prior to implementation.

consistent with the organization's academic purposes.		
5. The organization has:		
a) qualified senior administrative staff, including a chief executive officer who is accountable to the governing body and whose full-time or major responsibility is the administration of the institution.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) sufficient administrative staff with clear lines of administrative authority and accountability necessary to conduct the affairs of the institution in Ontario.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
c) administrative capacity to effectively manage an institution of higher learning as demonstrated by co-ordinated business and academic plans detailing the commitment to the academic quality of program content and delivery.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
6. Policies are in place that provide for succession planning.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
7. Development of the curriculum, academic policies and standards includes participation by qualified academic staff and consultation with students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

1. The organization:
 - Meets or exceeds the Board's standard
 - Does not meet the Board's standard
2. Identify, for this standard:
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Major weaknesses
 - c. Minor weaknesses
3. Was the information provided in the submission combined with any additional information sought from the organization sufficient, reliable, and valid for the purposes of this review?
 - Yes
 - No (if no, please comment)

3. ETHICAL CONDUCT STANDARD

Standard: *The applicant values and upholds integrity and ethical conduct.*

Benchmarks:	Meets or exceeds the benchmark (Y/N)?⁵	If no: comment on a) whether the required revisions are major or minor ⁶ ; b) the nature of the revisions required; c) the reasons for your judgements; and d) any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements. If yes: detail any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.
1. The governing Board has produced an acceptable statement of the ethical standards relating to fair and honest business practices that will guide its conduct in the course of operations in Ontario and in other jurisdictions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

1. The organization:
 - Meets or exceeds the Board’s standard
 - Does not meet the Board’s standard
2. Identify, for this standard:
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Major weaknesses
 - c. Minor weaknesses

⁵ Indicate whether the Applicant

- Meets or exceeds the benchmark (check “Y” for “yes”); or
- Does not meet the benchmark (check “N” for “no”).

⁶ **Major:** Required revisions to meet the threshold are substantial, would take significant time and/or resources to rectify, and/or should be re-assessed before being implemented.

Minor: Required revisions to meet the threshold are relatively minor, the institution has the capacity to implement them, and they do not require reassessment prior to implementation.

3. Was the information provided in the submission combined with any additional information sought from the organization sufficient, reliable, and valid for the purposes of this review?
- Yes
 - No (if no, please comment)

4. ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND INTEGRITY STANDARD

Standard:

The applicant maintains an atmosphere in which academic freedom exists and in which students and academic staff are expected to display a high degree of intellectual independence. Academic activity is supported by policies, procedures and practices that encourage academic honesty and integrity.

Benchmarks:	Meets or exceeds the benchmark (Y/N)?⁷	If no: comment on <i>e) whether the required revisions are major or minor⁸;</i> <i>f) the nature of the revisions required;</i> <i>g) the reasons for your judgements; and</i> <i>h) any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.</i> If yes: detail any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.
1. The applicant has a policy on academic freedom that recognizes and protects the rights of individuals in their pursuit of knowledge without fear of reprisals by the applicant or by third parties, and the right of individuals to communicate acquired knowledge and the results of research freely.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
2. When students or staff are required to adhere to a statement of faith and/or a code of conduct, the applicant:		

⁷ Indicate whether the Applicant

- Meets or exceeds the benchmark (check “Y” for “yes”); or
- Does not meet the benchmark (check “N” for “no”).

⁸ **Major:** Required revisions to meet the threshold are substantial, would take significant time and/or resources to rectify, and/or should be re-assessed before being implemented.

Minor: Required revisions to meet the threshold are relatively minor, the institution has the capacity to implement them, and they do not require reassessment prior to implementation.

a) has a policy that ensures staff and students are notified of the requirement prior to employment or admission;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) has procedures in place to ensure that the principles of natural justice are followed in the event of alleged violations of any policy or contractual arrangement concerning any required statement of faith and/or code of conduct; and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
c) demonstrates that the organization's curriculum development, content and delivery procedures and practices ensure an academic environment in which: i) a full and balanced treatment of the commonly-held, academic body of knowledge, theories and opinions with respect to the various individual subjects and general discipline areas that comprise the program of study is appreciated and fostered; and ii) both students and faculty are permitted and expected to engage in an open dialogue with and about these various theories and opinions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
3. The applicant has appropriate policies pertaining to academic honesty and procedures for their enforcement.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
4. The applicant provides an appropriate plan for informing students and faculty about and ensuring their understanding of the policies and procedures concerning academic honesty.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
5. The applicant has an appropriate policy on the ownership of the intellectual products of employees and students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
6. The applicant upholds formal ethical research standards. Where the applicant conducts research in Ontario that involves the management of research funds, the use of animals in research or human research participants, the policies of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and/or the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada will govern the research.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
7. There are appropriate policies and procedures concerning compliance with copyright law.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

8. Where courses/programs are delivered online, the institution has appropriate policies and procedures to address copyright and intellectual property issues (e.g., digital rights management and the use of object learning repositories).	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
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1. The organization:
 - Meets or exceeds the Board's standard
 - Does not meet the Board's standard

2. Identify, for this standard:
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Major weaknesses
 - c. Minor weaknesses

3. Was the information provided in the submission combined with any additional information sought from the organization sufficient, reliable, and valid for the purposes of this review?
 - Yes
 - No (if no, please comment)

SAMPLE

5. STUDENT PROTECTION STANDARD

Standard:

The applicant values and upholds the integrity and ethical conduct in its relations with students.

Benchmarks:	Meets or exceeds the benchmark (Y/N)?⁹	If no: comment on a) whether the required revisions are major or minor ¹⁰ ; b) the nature of the revisions required; c) the reasons for your judgements; and d) any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements. If yes: detail any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.
1. Public reports, materials and advertising are produced in a thorough, accurate and truthful manner.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
2. Recruitment policies follow ethical business practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
3. Key information about the applicant's organization, policies and programs is published in its academic year calendar and is otherwise readily available to students and the public, specifically including:		
a) the organization's mission and goals statements;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) a history of the organization and its governance and academic structure;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
c) a general description of each degree program (e.g., purpose, outcomes, length);	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
d) the academic credentials of faculty and senior administrators; and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

⁹ Indicate whether the Applicant

- Meets or exceeds the benchmark (check "Y" for "yes"); or
- Does not meet the benchmark (check "N" for "no").

¹⁰ **Major:** Required revisions to meet the threshold are substantial, would take significant time and/or resources to rectify, and/or should be re-assessed before being implemented.

Minor: Required revisions to meet the threshold are relatively minor, the institution has the capacity to implement them, and they do not require reassessment prior to implementation.

e) individual descriptions of all courses in programs and their credit value.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
4. The applicant has policies and procedures that protect student and consumer interests in the following areas:		
a) security of academic student records;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) payment schedule of fees and charges;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
c) student dismissal; and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
d) withdrawal and refunds.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
5. Prior to registration, students are provided with, and confirm in writing their awareness of, policies (and procedures) pertaining to:		
a) admissions;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) credit transfer arrangements for incoming students;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
c) credit transfer arrangements with and recognition by other institutions;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
d) entrance examinations;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
e) prior learning assessment;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
f) grading;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
g) the ability of international students admitted to the program to meet program requirements for degree completion;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
h) method of course delivery;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
i) academic honesty;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
j) intellectual property rights;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
k) student dismissal;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
l) student support and services;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
m) tuition;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
n) scholarships and other financial assistance;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
o) payment of fees and charges;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
p) withdrawals and refunds;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
q) institutional closure; and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
r) where appropriate, supervision, preparation and examination of	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

theses/dissertations.		
6. For courses and/or programs that incorporate blended, hybrid or online delivery ¹¹ , potential students are fully informed about:		
a) the technological requirements of participation and the technical competence required of them;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) the nature of learning and the personal discipline required in an anytime/anywhere environment;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
c) any additional costs, beyond tuition and ancillary fees associated with e-learning aspects of course/program delivery; and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
d) the kind of support and protection available to them.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

1. The organization:
 - Meets or exceeds the Board's standard
 - Does not meet the Board's standard
2. Identify, for this standard:
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Major weaknesses
 - c. Minor weaknesses
3. Was the information provided in the submission combined with any additional information sought from the organization sufficient, reliable, and valid for the purposes of this review?
 - Yes
 - No (if no, please comment)

¹¹ **Traditional Delivery:** Classroom based teaching with assignments and activities which students pursue independently of each other. **Web Facilitated Delivery:** Web resources and technologies are used to facilitate what is essentially a face to face course. May use web pages and course management systems (CMS) to post syllabi, readings and assignments. **Blended/Hybrid Delivery:** Course blends online/e-learning and face to face delivery. Substantial parts of the content are delivered online and discussions, team projects and activities are used for learning. The number of face to face sessions is decreased as the volume of online activity increases. **Online Delivery:** A course where all or almost all of the content is web-based with no or a very small number of face to face meetings. Delivery methods included in the "online" category include multimedia, video conferencing, social networking, web-based learning management system (LMS), and/or learning objects.

6. FINANCIAL VIABILITY STANDARD

Standard:

The applicant demonstrates financial stability and the financial resources to provide a stable learning environment and to ensure that students can complete the program.

Benchmarks:	Meets or exceeds the benchmark (Y/N)?¹²	If no: comment on a) whether the required revisions are major or minor ¹³ ; b) the nature of the revisions required; c) the reasons for your judgements; and d) any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements. If yes: detail any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.
1. The institution has the financial management procedures, resources and appropriate planning to provide a stable learning environment and to ensure that students can complete the degree program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
2. The applicant's short- and long-term business plans (at least five years) that address the applicant's future educational, enrolment , physical and fiscal growth in Ontario:		
a) include a best case/worst case scenario;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) include the organization's academic, financial, facilities, marketing and human resource plans and costs broken down by major cost areas, academic salaries, other salaries, equipment, library acquisitions, space, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

¹² Indicate whether the Applicant

- Meets or exceeds the benchmark (check "Y" for "yes"); or
- Does not meet the benchmark (check "N" for "no").

¹³ **Major:** Required revisions to meet the threshold are substantial, would take significant time and/or resources to rectify, and/or should be re-assessed before being implemented.

Minor: Required revisions to meet the threshold are relatively minor, the institution has the capacity to implement them, and they do not require reassessment prior to implementation.

c) demonstrate the organization's commitment to academic quality of program content and delivery; and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
d) are credible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
3. Financial information contained in the business plan indicates that the organization has a financial base adequate to support activities consistent with its mission and educational objectives, and the required financial resources for start-up and ongoing operating costs associated with the delivery of the proposed program(s).	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
4. The institution demonstrates financial capacity sufficient to assure stability and the financial resources to provide a stable learning environment and to ensure that the number of students assumed in the business plan can complete the degree program in the event that revenue falls short of the business plan or costs exceed the estimated allowances. (The financial information includes an audited financial statement ¹⁴ in the case of existing institutions, or a pro forma financial statement for newly established organizations).	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
5. The institution has identified the source of funds to be invested.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
6. The institution has a policy requiring the regular audit of the applicant's financial methods, performance and stability by a qualified third-party accountant in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
7. The institution subscribes to an annual reporting format that will permit the Board to assess whether the criteria described above are being met.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

1. The organization:
 - Meets or exceeds the Board's standard
 - Does not meet the Board's standard
2. Identify, for this standard:
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Major weaknesses
 - c. Minor weaknesses

¹⁴ Audited or pro forma statements to be prepared by a qualified independent accountant (e.g., CA, CGA, CMA).

3. Was the information provided in the submission combined with any additional information sought from the organization sufficient, reliable, and valid for the purposes of this review?
- Yes
 - No (if no, please comment)

7. DISPUTE RESOLUTION STANDARD

Standard:

The applicant has policies for dealing with disputes between the organization and its students, and between faculty and students.

Benchmarks:	Meets or exceeds the benchmark (Y/N)?¹⁵	If no: comment on a) whether the required revisions are major or minor ¹⁶ ; b) the nature of the revisions required; c) the reasons for your judgements; and d) any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements. If yes: detail any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.
1. Institutional policies and procedures ensure that academic appeals, complaints, grievances and/or other disputes of students, faculty, staff and administration are dealt with in accordance with the principles of natural justice:		
a) individuals have a right to a fair and expeditious resolution of disputes;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) individuals have a right to know and understand the charges or complaints made against them;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
c) individuals have a right to be heard in response to charges or complaints made against them, before any disciplinary decision is taken;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

¹⁵ Indicate whether the Applicant

- Meets or exceeds the benchmark (check “Y” for “yes”); or
- Does not meet the benchmark (check “N” for “no”).

¹⁶ **Major:** Required revisions to meet the threshold are substantial, would take significant time and/or resources to rectify, and/or should be re-assessed before being implemented.

Minor: Required revisions to meet the threshold are relatively minor, the institution has the capacity to implement them, and they do not require reassessment prior to implementation.

d) institutions have a an obligation to deal with complaints or grievances according to clear and reasonable deadlines; and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
e) institutions have an obligation to establish and operate according to administrative processes that deal with disputes fairly and expeditiously at the informal level.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
2. Students and employees are informed about and understand the policies and procedures for dispute resolution. To these ends, the organization's policies ensure that:		
a) charges or complaints against an individual are stated clearly and in writing;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) there is an administrative person(s) responsible for dealing with complaints, and to whom complaints may be directed, who may facilitate the informal resolution of disputes;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
c) there is a process for reviewing disputes and examining the evidence; and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
d) there is provision for a final internal review by a body of persons not involved in the dispute in any way.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

1. The organization:
 - Meets or exceeds the Board's standard
 - Does not meet the Board's standard
2. Identify, for this standard:
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Major weaknesses
 - c. Minor weaknesses
3. Was the information provided in the submission combined with any additional information sought from the organization sufficient, reliable, and valid for the purposes of this review?
 - Yes
 - No (if no, please comment)

8. ORGANIZATION EVALUATION STANDARD

Standard: The quality of the operational and administrative aspects of the organization is assured by procedures for periodic evaluation that meet the requirements outlined below.

Benchmarks:	Meets or exceeds the benchmark (Y/N)?¹⁷	If no: comment on a) whether the required revisions are major or minor ¹⁸ ; b) the nature of the revisions required; c) the reasons for your judgements; and d) any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements. If yes: detail any commitments or important clarifications the applicant made during the review that were critical to your judgements.
1. The applicant has a formal, institutionally approved policy and procedure for the periodic review of its operational and administrative policies and procedures embodying the following characteristics:		
a) organizational reviews at regular intervals, normally not exceeding five to seven years. The first such evaluation should occur before a request for renewal of ministerial consent;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) criteria for organizational review that include: i) assessment of continuing adequacy of the organization’s mission statement and academic goals to accurately identify the academic character and aspirations of the organization; ii) assessment of the continuing adequacy of the organization’s governance structure and qualified administrative capacity necessary to organize and manage a competent institution of higher learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

¹⁷ Indicate whether the Applicant

- Meets or exceeds the benchmark (check “Y” for “yes”); or
- Does not meet the benchmark (check “N” for “no”).

¹⁸ **Major:** Required revisions to meet the threshold are substantial, would take significant time and/or resources to rectify, and/or should be re-assessed before being implemented.

Minor: Required revisions to meet the threshold are relatively minor, the institution has the capacity to implement them, and they do not require reassessment prior to implementation.

with appropriate participation by qualified academic staff and in consultation with students;		
c) assessment of the organization's ethical conduct and business practices in its dealings with administrative, academic and support staff, students, regulators, suppliers and the public in general;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
d) assessment of the continuing accuracy and completeness of the institution's public reports, materials and advertising and the key information about the organization and determining that it is readily available to potential and current students;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
e) assessment of the organization's commitment to, and the continuing appropriateness of, its academic freedom and integrity policies in that they: i) recognize and protect the rights of individuals in their pursuit of knowledge; ii) clearly define the ownership of intellectual products of employees and students; iii) uphold formal ethical research standards; and iv) foster and enforce academic honesty;	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
f) assessment of the continued financial stability of the organization and of the adequacy of its financial resources to provide a stable learning environment and to ensure that students can complete the program with the stated learning outcomes; and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
g) assessment of the continuing appropriateness of the organization's dispute resolution policies and practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
2. The organization's review procedure includes;		
a) Self-Study A Self-study undertaken with student input, by administrators, faculty members and staff of the organization based on evidence relating to organizational performance against the criteria stated above including strengths and weaknesses, desired improvements and future directions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
b) Organization Evaluation Committee An Organization Evaluation Committee struck by the senior administration to evaluate the organization's operational and	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

<p>administrative activities, policies and procedures based on</p> <p>i) the self-study; and</p> <p>ii) a site visit during which members of the committee normally meet with administrators, faculty members, students, graduates and other relevant parties such as financial auditors, bankers and critical service providers to gather information. A majority of the members must have relevant expertise in the degree granting environment, be from outside the institution and be free of any conflict of interest.</p>		
<p>c) The Report of the Committee.</p> <p>The overarching purpose of the Organization Evaluation Committee report is to assess the appropriateness and quality of the organization's operation, policies and procedures, and to recommend any changes needed to strengthen that quality. The report must be addressed to the senior administration and be shared with the academic council and governing Board, together with a plan of action responding to the recommendations in the report.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N</p>	
<p>3. The implementation of the policy and procedures for the periodic review if the organization:</p>		
<p>a) is aligned with the Board's requirements for such evaluation; and</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N</p>	
<p>b) achieves its intended aim of continuous improvement of the organization.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N</p>	

Background

Degree Granting in Ontario

Applications for Ministerial Consent

Under the terms of the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000* (the Act), the consent of the Ontario Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities is required for anyone without legislative authority seeking in Ontario, either "directly or indirectly," to

- grant a degree;
- provide a program or part of a program of postsecondary study leading to a degree to be conferred by a person inside or outside of Ontario;
- advertise a program or part of a program of postsecondary study offered in Ontario leading to a degree conferred by a person in or outside Ontario;
- sell, offer for sale or provide by agreement for a fee, reward or other remuneration, a diploma, certificate, document or other material that indicates or implies the granting or conferring of a degree;
- operate or maintain a university;
- use or be known by a name of a university or any derivation or abbreviation of a name of a university;
- hold oneself out to be a university;
- make use of the term university or any derivation or abbreviation of the word in advertising relating to an educational institution in Ontario; and
- make substantial changes to programs offered pursuant to a consent.

Anyone wishing to engage in these activities must apply to the Minister, who, pursuant to the Act, must refer all applications for consent to the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB/the Board).

Role of the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board

Established in 2000, and continued under the Act, the Board is composed of a chair appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, a vice-chair and up to nine other members appointed by the Minister. The Board makes recommendations to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities concerning applications for ministerial consent under the terms of the Act and other matters referred to it by the Minister pursuant to the Act. The Board establishes the criteria and processes for its reviews, consults experts as required and undertakes necessary research.

Role of the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board Secretariat

PEQAB Secretariat staff:

- support the Board in fulfilling its mandate;
- communicate on the role of the Board and its operations to prospective applicants, stakeholders and others; and
- manage all applications for consent.

Additional Information related to your Review

Review and Assessment of Applications for Ministerial Consent

Role of the Panel Chair

The panel chair's responsibilities include:

- planning and assigning the activities to the panel;
- liaising with the applicant regarding timing and setting the agenda for the site visit;
- organizing the panel's work; and
- coordinating and preparing the final report using these *Guidelines*.

Role of the Quality Assessment Panel (QAP)

The primary obligation of the quality assessment panel (QAP) is to provide its best judgement on the quality of the proposed program. To this end, Quality Assessors are asked to assess proposals against the standards and benchmarks set by PEQAB, to consider any special instructions indicated by PEQAB, and, when members of the panel deem it appropriate, to identify and address any other quality-related issues arising from the proposal.

Under the coordination of the panel chair, the panel develops a report which should provide the best collective judgement of the panel with respect to the quality of the proposed program, the reasons for its judgements, and be of sufficient detail to enable the Board to determine the extent to which its criteria are satisfied. The key issues are whether the proposed program meets the standards set by the Board, and whether panel members think the program is of sufficient quality to be recommended to the Board and eventually to the students of Ontario. More specifically, the report must include at least the following:

- an assessment of the application against each of the Board's standards and benchmarks;
- an assessment of the application in terms of any additional matters raised by the Board;
- an assessment of the sufficiency, reliability and validity of the evidence provided by the Applicant;
- an assessment of evidence found during any site visit, resulting from the panel's research, or submitted to the panel by other parties; and
- a recommendation, with reasons, on whether the proposed program meets the Board's criteria and is of sufficient academic quality to be offered to the people of Ontario.

Quality Assessor Procedures

- peruse the submission and guidelines included in this document;
- panels often work through the *Guidelines* as they do a desk audit, making preliminary judgements on the strengths and weaknesses of the program and noting items that require follow-up at the site visit. Reviewing the submission and conducting a desk audit prior to the site visit typically aids in the drafting of the report;
- set questions for discussion/clarification to be raised when meeting with other member of the panel;
- set tentative questions for the site visit;
- identify who needs to respond to the panel's questions at the visit; and
- determine what is needed in the way of additional information.

Additional Information provided by the Applicant

The Board provides QAPs with the applicant's complete submission for review as well as any supplementary information the Board has received from the applicant. The Board asks the panel to direct any requests for additional information from the applicant through the panel chair. Additional

information pertaining to the application received by the panel should be forwarded to the Secretariat together with the panel's report.

The Site Visit

In most cases, panels are expected to undertake a one-day site visit where they can test the validity of claims made in the application. Where several locations are proposed, the chair decides which one(s) to include in the visit. Ultimately, the chair will determine, in consultation with the PEQAB secretariat, if a site visit is needed. The chair will establish the site visit strategy and develop an appropriate schedule in consultation with the applicant.

Duties of the Institutional Liaison

The institutional contact person ensures that the visit is arranged so that the agenda can be realised, including scheduling meetings and rooms for the panel. Panel members will make their own travel arrangements (transportation, hotel room), but may consult the institution for recommendations. During the visit, the team will wish to interview senior administrators, faculty, students and alumni (in the case of renewal applications) to gain a cross-sectional view and a variety of perspectives on key issues. Depending on the type of review, they may also wish to meet with support or collaborating staff and examine facilities and other resources. The panel's expectations need to be made clear prior to the site visit. The chair might begin each interview session by identifying the objectives of the interview and by posing open-ended questions and questions that evoke analysis and dialogue. Panel members are encouraged to take careful notes of each interview session as they will be invaluable when writing the report. The panel is encouraged to keep interviews to a manageable number. Too many interviews may limit the panel's ability to explore an issue comprehensively. The panel might decide to include a session at the end of the site visit to conclude and reach consensus about the content of the report.

Writing the Report

Under the coordination of the panel chair, the panel will prepare a report for the Board. The report should provide the best collective judgement of the panel with respect to the quality of the proposed program, the reasons for its judgements, and include sufficient detail in narrative form to enable the Board to determine the extent to which its criteria are satisfied and provide the Board with the information it needs to make an informed decision. Deficiencies should be documented particularly carefully. The key issues are whether the proposed program meets the standards set by the Board, and whether the panel members think the program is of sufficient quality to be recommended to the Board and eventually to the students of Ontario.

The materials provided in these *Guidelines* are intended to be an aid to the panel and the Board. They should not be seen as limiting the scope of the assessment or the panel's full report to the Board.

Diverging Opinions

The members of a QAP may not always agree on all matters. The Board is interested in knowing about areas of substantive disagreement, the nature of the disagreement, and the reasons for the disagreement. The Board does not want to receive minority reports. It requires a single report, which should include divergent opinions fully and fairly.

Applicant Commitments

During the review, the applicant may make commitments that alter what the panel's judgement would be for the submission alone. It is important to document such commitments in the report and their role in your judgements. The panel's final assessment should be based on all information provided by the applicant, including additional materials and commitments made during the review. The applicant will have to confirm that they made the commitment and their intention to honour it. The Board will

then be in the position of determining whether the commitments are reasonable and whether the applicant is capable of honouring (hence the importance of your advice in this regard).

Ownership of Reports

The QAP's report and all related attachments are the property of the Minister. The panel will hold its deliberations and preliminary report in confidence. Following the Minister's decision on the application and in accordance with the Board's terms of reference, the Board may post on its web site all official report(s) of the quality assessment panel and the applicant responses to them, or make these reports otherwise available to the public subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Following the Submission of the Report

Applicant Responses to Reports

To ensure a transparent and fair assessment process, the Board will provide the applicant with the opportunity to respond to the panel's report. In some cases, the Board may ask the panel to respond to the applicant's remarks.

Next Steps

In formulating its recommendation, the Board will consider:

- the applicant's submission;
- the findings of the QAP;
- the applicant's response to the panel report;
- any additional materials provided by the applicant to the Board; and
- any commitments made by the applicant during the review process.

The Board communicates its recommendation to the Minister. The Minister considers the Board's recommendation and any public policy matters, and makes a decision about consent. If consent is granted, it is normally for a five-year period, after which the program(s) must be reviewed again.