From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2013 8:14 AM
To: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Subject: Re: QAF Summary

Could you please forward it as soon as possible. Ian will want it on Tuesday or before if possible.

----- Original Message -----
From: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Sent: Thursday, August 01, 2013 07:45 AM Pacific Standard Time
To: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: RE: QAF Summary

Dao is still working on it. She is bringing a copy for me to review today.

* * * * * * * *
Dorothy Rogers
Director
Quality Assurance Unit, DQAB Secretariat Governance and Quality Assurance Branch Ministry of Advanced Education
250-387-6298

-----Original Message-----
From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2013 6:50 AM
To: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Subject: QAF Summary

Do we have a version of the summary to review?

From: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2013 9:45 AM
To: Simmons, Vicki AVED:EX; Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: FW: SABC Governance Committee

fyi

* * * * * * * *
Dorothy Rogers
Director
Quality Assurance Unit, DQAB Secretariat
Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education
250-387-6298

From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2013 9:34 AM
To: Letawske, Kevan AVED:EX
Cc: Reid, Tracy-Jo AVED:EX; Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX; Dunsdon, Kelly AVED:EX
Subject: Re: SABC Governance Committee

Thanks for attending Kevan!

The update could include:
- we are stepping back from the green paper to see what quality improvements can be made with the
sectors
- we are leading a lean review of all designation processes in the Ministry to streamline and align SFA
designation, EQA, and getting on the CIC list
- working with DQAB to determine if any of the Stubb's report recommendations can be implemented
- working with unregulated institutions to get those who want to be, on the CIC list - languags Canada
and Theologicals
- in the fall we are doing a soft review of PCTIA (not reported to PCTIA yet)

Thanks Kevin,
Val

From: Letawske, Kevan AVED:EX
Sent: Thursday, August 01, 2013 08:51 AM Pacific Standard Time
To: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: SABC Governance Committee

Good Morning Val,

I've been informed by Lynn that I have the pleasure of attending the SABCV Governance Committee
this morning. In reviewing the agenda, I see that one of the standing items is Quality Assurance and
am wondering if there is any sort of update you would like me to give to the group on the topic?

Kevan

From:	Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent:	Thursday, August 1, 2013 5:08 PM
To:	Gilmore, Dan GCPE:EX; Stewart, Jacqui AVED:EX
Cc:	Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX; Wyllie, Sandra AVED:EX
Subject:	Re: The Tyee: BC Plan for Post-Secondary Accreditation Reform Falls Flat

Not too bad.
It does speak nicely about our collaborative approach.

From: Gilmore, Dan GCPE:EX
Sent: Thursday, August 01, 2013 04:31 PM Pacific Standard Time
To: Stewart, Jacqui AVED:EX
Cc: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX; Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX; Wyllie, Sandra AVED:EX
Subject: FW: The Tyee: BC Plan for Post-Secondary Accreditation Reform Falls Flat

Not a bad story. Told her ADM was away, not the4 DM, though he is! Like the way the story ends with one of our positive bullets!

From: tno@gov.bc.ca [mailto:tno@gov.bc.ca]
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2013 11:13 AM
Subject: The Tyee: BC Plan for Post-Secondary Accreditation Reform Falls Flat

The Tyee
Katie Hyslop
01-Aug-2013 11:15
{ tone-5x }

s.3

Pages 4 through 7 redacted for the following reasons:
- -
s.3

From: Caroline Caiger | s.22
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2013 2:34 PM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: RE: Respose numbers

Ooops. Here you go.

April 10 - 32 participants
April 12 - 35 participants

Caroline Caiger
Equotations
Email:
Phone: s.22

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX [mailto:Dao.Luu@gov.bc.ca]
Sent: August-02-13 2:27 PM
To: 'Caroline Caiger'
Subject: RE: Respose numbers

Thank you! And the webinar numbers?

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia
Cell: s.17 | Fax: (250) 387-3750

From: Caroline Caiger [mailto   s.22
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2013 2.27 PM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: RE: Respose numbers

Hi Dao,

Here you go. A handy dandy table:

March 19
23
March 20
26
March 21
24
March 22
27
PCTIA
24
FNESC/IAHLA
15
July 8
33
July 9
16
July 15
29

Page 1

July 16
48
July 18
36

Caroline Caiger
Equotations
Email:
Phone: s.22

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX [mailto:Dao.Luu@gov.bc.ca]
Sent: August-02-13 12:55 PM
To: 'Caroline Caiger'
Subject: RE: Respose numbers

Thank you. Can you send me numbers of how many participants we had for each day of consultation
for waves 3 and 4. Please include the FNESC/IAHLA meeting as well.

Can you also tell me the number of webinars and the number of log-in sites for the webinars?

Thanks!
Dao

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia
Cell: s.17   Fax: (250) 387-3750

From: Caroline Caiger [mailto: s.22
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2013 2:29 PM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: Respose numbers

Hi Dao,

Here are the numbers you were looking for:

21 individual submissions
27 survey responses

Caroline Caiger
Equotations
Email:
Phone: s.22

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Checked by AVG - www.avg.com
Version: 2013.0.3392 / Virus Database: 3209/6543 - Release Date: 08/01/13
No virus found in this message.

Checked by AVG - www.avg.com
Version: 2013.0.3392 / Virus Database: 3209/6545 - Release Date: 08/02/13
No virus found in this message.
Checked by AVG - www.avg.com
Version: 2013.0.3392 / Virus Database: 3209/6545 - Release Date: 08/02/13

From: Caroline Caiger   s.22
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2013 2:40 PM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX; Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX; Bakowski, Valarie
AVED:EX
Subject: Table of attendance numbers

Hi all,
Since attendance numbers are the number one request, here is a table with actual attendance
numbers from Phase 3 onward:
https://aved.collaborate.gov.bc.ca/branches/qa/Equotations/Consultation%20Documenta
tion/Q
UALITY%20ASSURANCE%20ATTENDANCE%20TABLE.docx
Thanks,

Caroline Caiger
Equotations
Email:
Phone: s.22

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Checked by AVG - www.avg.com
Version: 2013.0.3392 / Virus Database: 3209/6545 - Release Date: 08/02/13

RE FYI - BC PSE quality assurance plan unpopular with some

From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2013 11:33 AM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: RE: FYI - BC PSE quality assurance plan unpopular with some

Are there other neat things that you subscribe to Dao?

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2013 10:29 AM
To: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: RE: FYI - BC PSE quality assurance plan unpopular with some

Yes, it's an excerpt. Academica Top Ten provides a brief quasi-summary and then a link to the actual
article at the end of the paragraph.

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia
Cell: s.17 | Fax: (250) 387-3750

From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2013 10:26 AM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: RE: FYI - BC PSE quality assurance plan unpopular with some

Is this part of the last article - I recall the article being much longer.

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2013 10:26 AM
To: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: RE: FYI - BC PSE quality assurance plan unpopular with some

Hi Val,

Yes, this is the Tyee article.

Dao

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia
Cell: s.17   Fax: (250) 387-3750

From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2013 10:16 AM
To: Wilson, Kevin M AVED:EX; Reid, Tracy-Jo AVED:EX; Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: RE: FYI - BC PSE quality assurance plan unpopular with some

When was this in the Tyee?

From: Wilson, Kevin M AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2013 9:43 AM
To: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX; Reid, Tracy-Jo AVED:EX; Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: FYI - BC PSE quality assurance plan unpopular with some

FYI - in case you hadn't seen this.

BC PSE quality assurance plan unpopular with
some

BC's ministry of advanced education has proposed a new PSE quality assurance
framework for
accreditations to replace the current system, which many sector stakeholders agree
is bogged
down with bureaucracy and "vague, inconsistent rules." The government released a
discussion
paper in 2011, followed by sector consultations throughout 2012-13. Last March,
they proposed
a one-accreditation-body system that would cover all PSE institutions, including
private-language
schools. However, stakeholders have responded negatively, saying the
"one-size-fits-all
approach" won't work for such a diverse set of institutions. While one system may
save
taxpayers' money, Jeremy Sabell, president of the BC Career Colleges Association,
says what
they save in money could cost PSE institutions in time spent pushing their
applications through
the system. The Council of Ontario Universities released a new province-wide
Quality
Assurance Framework in 2011, which is administered through the arms-length Quality
Council.
The Tyee

Kevin Wilson
Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education,

Tel: (250) 387-6195
E-mail: Kevin.M.Wilson@gov.bc.ca

From:	Caroline Caiger s.22
Sent:	Tuesday, August 6, 2013 11:43 AM
To:	Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject:	List of individual submissions, survey responses and webinar participants
Attachments:	List of individual submissions, survey responses and webinar participants.docx; "Certification"

Hi Dao,

Unfortunately, for the surveys, we only have email addresses so it's hard to figure out what the institution is. I sorted what I could for the webinars but again the list only has email addresses. I can put together a full list from the original emails we received if you think it would be good to have. Let me know. Thanks.

Caroline Caiger
Equotations
Email:
Phone: s.22

Individual submissions:

1. Joint theological school submission:

Dr. Kent Anderson, President	Northwest Baptist Seminary
Dr. Bryan Born, President	Columbia Bible College
Dr. Daryl Busby, Dean	Canadian Baptist Seminary
Rob Buzza, President	Pacific Life Bible College
Dr. Dave Demchuk, President	Summit Pacific College
Rev. Dr. Stephan Farris, Dean	St. Andrew's Hall
and Acting Principal	Vancouver School of Theology
Dr. Bruce L. Guenther, President	Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary
Rev. Dr. Mark Hagemoen, Principal	St. Mark's College
Dr. Jim Lucas, President	Canadian Pentecostal Seminary
Dr. Barbara Mutch, Vice President Academic	Carey Theological College
Rev. Gerald Nussbaum, President	Christ College
Dr. Ken Radant, Principal	ACTS Seminaries
Dr. Gerry Schoberg, Sr. Academic Administrator	Regent College

2. Dr. C. Okoye — Metropolitan College
3. Mike Walkey — ELS Language Centres
4. Sharon Curl, President — Eurocentres Canada
5. Barbara M. Godt, Marketing Director — King George International College
6. John A. Boon J.D. — HKMK Law Corporation - on behalf of (?)
7. Paul Zysman, Chairman — ILSC
8. Trevor Toone — Columbia College
9. Dr. Alfredo Vasquez, Director — Arbutus College
10. Mr. Dan J. Tidsbury, Director — Vancouver International College
11. Jan Lindsay, President — North Island College
12. Vivian Raey-Scarcella, Policy Analyst — AEIT

Survey (this was anonymous unless they volunteered their email address):

s.22

Pages 16 through 17 redacted for the following reasons:
- -
s.22

From: Caroline Caiger   s.22
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2013 2:00 PM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: Webinar Attendance Lists

Hi Dao,
I put together the attendance lists for the webinars, sorted by institution name. I'm not sure
what happened to the lists we had – probably on the LAN somewhere.
https://aved.collaborate.gov.bc.ca/branches/qa/Equotations/Webinars/APRIL%2010%20WE
BIN
AR%20ATTENDANCE%20LIST.docx
https://aved.collaborate.gov.bc.ca/branches/qa/Equotations/Webinars/APRIL%2012%20WE
BIN
AR%20ATTENDANCE%20LIST.docx

Caroline Caiger
Equotations
Email:
Phone: s.22

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Checked by AVG - www.avg.com
Version: 2013.0.3392 / Virus Database: 3209/6555 - Release Date: 08/06/13

From: Marilyn Patton [Marilyn.Patton@gov.ab.ca]
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 10:16 AM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Cc: Simmons, Vicki AVED:EX; Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX; Carnegie, Lynn
AVED:EX; Lee, Ally AVED:EX; Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: RE: Connecting with CAQC re Green Paper

That's wonderful news, Dao. Please block that time in their calendars and we'll get back to everyone
to confirm later this month. Thanks.

Marilyn

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX [mailto:Dao.Luu@gov.bc.ca]
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 11:13 AM
To: Marilyn Patton
Cc: Simmons, Vicki AVED:EX; Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX; Carnegie, Lynn AVED:EX; Lee,
Ally AVED:EX;
Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: RE: Connecting with CAQC re Green Paper

Hi Marilyn,

Vicki Simmons asked me to respond to your email. Both Dorothy and Val will be available on
September 20, from 9:00-11:00 (BC time). Please confirm the time and we'll make arrangements for
the video conferencing.

Please let me know if you need anything further.

Sincerely,
Dao

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia
Cell: s.17 | Fax: (250) 387-3750

From: Marilyn Patton [mailto:Marilyn.Patton@gov.ab.ca]
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 7:40 AM
To: Simmons, Vicki AVED:EX
Subject: FW: Connecting with CAQC re Green Paper

Hi Vicki,
Dorothy's out-of-office message suggested I contact you. Anything you could do to nail down a time,
etc. would be much appreciated.

Thanks,
Marilyn

From: Marilyn Patton
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 8:13 AM
To: 'Rogers, Dorothy AEIT:EX'
Cc: Guy Germain; 'Lee, Ally AEIT:EX'; 'Carnegie, Lynn AEIT:EX'; 'Bakowski, Valarie
AEIT:EX'
Subject: RE: Connecting with CAQC re Green Paper

Hi Dorothy,

Page 1

s.22   but perhaps someone else might be able to
respond. we are
trying to finalize the agenda for the 19-20 September meeting of Council I thought
I should touch base
to determine what time would work best for our discussion with BC. Members were
disappointed
they didn't get the opportunity to videoconference with you and Valarie in June and
are anxious to
have the conversation at their September meeting. Would sometime the afternoon of
the 19th or the
morning of the 20th work for you?

All the best,
Marilyn

Marilyn Patton, Director
CAQC Secretariat
Alberta Enterprise and Advanced Education
www.caqc.gov.ab.ca

From: Rogers, Dorothy AEIT:EX [mailto:Dorothy.Rogers@gov.bc.ca]
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 11:18 AM
To: Marilyn Patton
Cc: Guy Germain; Lee, Ally AEIT:EX; Carnegie, Lynn AEIT:EX; Bakowski, Valarie
AEIT:EX
Subject: RE: Connecting with CAQC re Green Paper

Hi Marilyn,

We would be happy to meet at that time. We will try out our new video conferencing
material.

Dorothy

* * * * * * * *
Dorothy Rogers
Director
Quality Assurance Unit, DQAB Secretariat
Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology

From: Marilyn Patton [mailto:Marilyn.Patton@gov.ab.ca]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 3:34 PM
To: Rogers, Dorothy AEIT:EX
Cc: Guy Germain
Subject: RE: Connecting with CAQC re Green Paper

We could juggle things and have the discussion from 8:30 to 9:30 BC time. The rest
of the morning is
set in stone, so to speak.

From: Rogers, Dorothy AEIT:EX [mailto:Dorothy.Rogers@gov.bc.ca]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 4:29 PM
To: Marilyn Patton
Cc: Guy Germain
Subject: RE: Connecting with CAQC re Green Paper

Do you have any time in the morning or is it the afternoon for sure?

* * * * * * * *
Dorothy Rogers

Director
Quality Assurance Unit, DQAB Secretariat
Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology

From: Marilyn Patton [mailto:Marilyn.Patton@gov.ab.ca]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 3:03 PM
To: Rogers, Dorothy AEIT:EX
Cc: Guy Germain
Subject: RE: Connecting with CAQC re Green Paper

We just got notification that the Minister will be joining CAQC's meeting at 3:45
on the 20th. Could you
look at arranging the discussion with CAQC about the green paper at 1:30 your time
instead of 2 PM?

When will you know if this is possible and who will be meeting with us? We are
hoping to finalize the
scheduling tomorrow and the backgrounders on Monday, if possible. Sorry for the
short notice.

Thanks.
Marilyn

From: Marilyn Patton
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 3:17 PM
To: 'Dorothy.Rogers@gov.bc.ca'
Cc: Guy Germain
Subject: Connecting with CAQC re Green Paper

Now that the election is over and the same party is in power, perhaps things are
settling down for you
(I can hear you laughing).

Further to my request to have you or Val connect with Council at its June meeting,
I'm wondering if
you could do so on Thursday, 20 June in the afternoon (perhaps around 2 pm your
time).
Videoconferencing would be ideal, but if that isn't possible on your end, we could
do a
teleconference.

I look forward to hearing from you on this matter (and hopefully talking with you
tomorrow on the
teleconference).

Cheers,
Marilyn

From: Rogers, Dorothy AEIT:EX [mailto:Dorothy.Rogers@gov.bc.ca]
Sent: Wednesday, May 01, 2013 10:56 AM
To: Marilyn Patton
Subject: RE: reviewer

It is still as busy as ever. Yes, I think Brian is a wonderful choice and yes, he
was past President of BCIT
(although I want him to help us with our work.) I will email him that he is OK
with his contact info being
sent to you.

Yes, either myself or Val would be happy to address the Green Paper with the
Council. It will need to
wait until after the election is over.

Dorothy

* * * * * * *
Dorothy Rogers
Director
Quality Assurance Unit, DQAB Secretariat
Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology

From: Marilyn Patton [mailto:Marilyn.Patton@gov.ab.ca]
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2013 9:27 AM
To: Rogers, Dorothy AEIT:EX
Subject: reviewer

Hi Dorothy,
Are things any quieter with the election on? I hope for your sake that is the
case.

s.17

wondering if you think Brian Gillespie would be a good choice since, I believe he
was at BCIT before he
chaired DQAB. If you think he'd be good, do you know how I might contact him.
Interestingly I

s.22

Also you were going to inquire about someone talking with our Council about the
Green paper. Is this
still possible?

Thanks,
Marilyn

Marilyn Patton, Director
Campus Alberta Quality Council Secretariat
www.caqc.gov.ab.ca
(780) 427-8921

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individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in

From:	Patterson, Catherine M AVED:EX
Sent:	Monday, August 12, 2013 11:55 AM
To:	Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Cc:	Simmons, Vicki AVED:EX; Luu, Dao AVED:EX; Carnegie, Lynn AVED:EX; Lee, Ally AVED:EX
Subject:	RE: August 21 Meeting with Theologicals

Fabulous. Thanks.

From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 11:53 AM
To: Patterson, Catherine M AVED:EX
Cc: Simmons, Vicki AVED:EX; Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: Re: August 21 Meeting with Theologicals

The document is with me. I am going to chat with Dao tomorrow about the QAF summary.
Thank you,
Val

From: Patterson, Catherine M AVED:EX
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 11:09 AM Pacific Standard Time
To: Simmons, Vicki AVED:EX
Cc: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX; Lee, Ally AVED:EX; Carnegie, Lynn AVED:EX; Kilpatrick, Rosalyn AVED:EX
Subject: RE: August 21 Meeting with Theologicals

Hi Vicki,

I don't believe an information note was requested; however, Ian indicated this morning that staff would be pulling information together --- this is a follow-up to a previous meeting that Ian and Val has with theological representatives. I'm not sure what Val may have asked staff to work on.....Val???

Catherine

From: Simmons, Vicki AVED:EX
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 11:06 AM
To: Patterson, Catherine M AVED:EX
Cc: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX; Lee, Ally AVED:EX; Carnegie, Lynn AVED:EX; Kilpatrick, Rosalyn AVED:EX
Subject: RE: August 21 Meeting with Theologicals

Hi Catherine,

We don't seem to have a request for an information note for this. Do you know if it has been sent to us?

Thanks,
Vicki

Vicki Simmons
Senior Policy Analyst
Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
BC Ministry of Advanced Education

3rd Floor, 835 Humboldt St
PO Box 9883 Stn Prov Govt

From: Patterson, Catherine M AVED:EX
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 11:02 AM
To: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Cc: Lee, Ally AVED:EX; Carnegie, Lynn AVED:EX; Simmons, Vicki AVED:EX
Subject: August 21 Meeting with Theologicals

Hi Val,

s.22

Ian and you are scheduled to meet with Bruce Guenther and six representatives from the theological institutions on Wednesday August 21. Ian indicated that your staff are working on information for that meeting. To ensure that Ian has time to provide feedback, I will be scheduling a review meeting between yourself and Ian for the morning of August 19.

Cheers,

Catherine

Catherine Patterson
Executive Administrative Assistant
Sector Strategy and Quality Assurance Division
Ministry of Advanced Education
☎ 250 356-0826 📠 250 356-5468 ✆ Catherine.Patterson@gov.bc.ca

BRITISH
COLUMBIA

From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2013 11:29 AM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: RE: Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 14)

Please ignore the request for editing as I would like to get it done today.
Thank you,
Val

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2013 11:29 AM
To: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: Out of Office: Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 14)

Thanks for your email! I am out of the office until August 20 with limited access to email and
will reply when I return. If you require urgent assistance, please contact 250-356-9734.

Regards,
Dao

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia
Cell: s.17 | Fax: (250) 356-8851

From:	Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent:	Tuesday, August 20, 2013 11:59 AM
To:	Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject:	Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 14)
Attachments:	Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 14).docx

Hello Dao,

Could you please revise the sentence in red under the Challenges Section and then do one quick sweep of the paper?

Thank you,

Val

Quality Assurance Framework
August 2013

INTRODUCTION

British Columbia (B.C.) has a world renowned post-secondary education system. To maintain it, B.C. is committed to continuous quality improvement to ensure that stakeholders, including post-secondary institutions, students and employers, benefit from the outcomes of a quality assurance framework and that our quality assurance practices are consistent with recognized best practices. The primary objectives of B.C.'s quality assurance framework are to:

- protect students' investment in their own education;
- uphold rigorous provincial quality assurance standards that support institutional excellence; and
- promote confidence in educational quality across the entire post-secondary education system.

In March 2013, the Ministry released a quality assurance framework green paper for public review and comment. The proposed model was focused on continuous quality improvement principles and envisioned a cohesive, province-wide approach to quality assurance that recognizes institutional and sector diversity, provides greater student protection, streamlines multiple designation processes, and introduces proportionate external quality assurance oversight (see Appendix 1 in the green paper). The document was informed by consultations that began in the spring of 2012, previous government reports, and research relevant to quality assurance.

The vision that was presented was for a system that would be:

1. *more streamlined* for students and stakeholders to understand and for institutions and government to administer;
2. *more strategic* to enable a differentiated form and level of external quality assurance oversight reflecting demonstrated institutional internal strength in quality assessment practices; and
3. *more flexible* to foster and recognize innovation in the system.

During the spring of 2013, a substantial amount of positive and constructive feedback was received via multiple platforms, with system-wide discussion being the primary avenue.

Amongst the feedback received, two important elements stand out as having greatly influenced government's approach:

- **Timeline**. Concerns were raised that government was moving too quickly to implement broad scale improvements. Institutions felt strongly that more time and information was needed to ensure obligations of a new quality assurance framework could be met.

- **Scale and scope of change.** Participants questioned whether the proposed improvements were proportionate to the issues government was trying to address. It was suggested that government focus improvements in its areas of concern rather than full-scale change for the entire post-secondary education system.

In response to these elements, during the summer of 2013 government undertook a more collaborative and inclusive consultation process with the intention of collectively reflecting with the system on how to move forward with improvements to the quality assurance framework. Government is thus committed to listening to the system with an open mind on any suggested improvements and approaches identified as areas of priority.

Discussions held focused on the best quality assurance outcomes for the province, immediate issues that need to be addressed, and what considerations are important moving forward. The following questions were used to facilitate the meetings:

1. What is quality assurance in post-secondary education and is there anything that needs to be fixed in the current quality assurance and designation processes?
2. Are there challenges on the horizon that concern you?
3. Are there ways that we can collectively address the issues just identified?
   a. What can government do to help?
   b. What can government not do to help?
2. What is the minimal approach to change?
3. What is the most comprehensive approach to change?

Discussions were held with:

- Public institutions
- Private degree-granting institutions
- Private career-training institutions
- Private language schools

SYSTEM FEEDBACK

The summary of feedback begins with a common understanding of quality assurance, followed by the challenges identified in the sessions, and ends with suggestions for improvement.

Common Understanding of Quality Assurance

In respect to a defining a common understanding of quality assurance, consultation participants often made reference to outcomes and processes. These themes are consistent with what we was identified in earlier consultations with the system.

- **Effective outcomes for students.** Participants indicated that it was critical, that quality requires a description of learning outcomes and institutional transparency in stating and reporting outcomes. Students should be able to match their expectations with the outcomes of an educational program and be prepared to achieve the outcomes. Another component of a quality assurance process should provide validation of educational quality and ensures the integrity of credentials. Students, employers, licensing bodies and other stakeholders have an interest in a system of quality assurance that upholds rigorous standards. This would assure domestic and international markets that the program meets educational standards and that the credential earned is meaningful.

- **Ensure Student protection is provided regardless of the type of institution, the type of program or where the program is delivered.** Stakeholders agreed that ensuring institutional and program quality required that all students should receive the education promised in their institution's public documents, such as recruitment posters, websites and calendars. There was broad agreement that students should have access to free, easy-to-understand, comparable data for all post-secondary educational institutions to inform their decisions.

- **Effective quality assurance should be assessed within the context of institutional mission and educational purpose, be based on peer-review, and encourage continuous quality improvement.** Participants encouraged the Ministry to take a multi-dimensional understanding of *quality* as institutions and government must negotiate and balance multiple stakeholder perspectives on quality. Quality assurance should be outcomes-focused, data-driven, and transparent. Support for innovation and entrepreneurship to allow institutions to be creative in their pedagogic approaches, and responsive to student and community needs, was seen as a key component of a quality assurance process. Finally, it was stressed that quality assurance needs to be a collaborative effort between institutions and government. Institutions should have a fair level of autonomy and have primary responsibility for quality assessment of programs. Government has the responsibility to respond to public desire for accountability and transparency.

Challenges

Across the sectors, diverse student needs and expectations the goal to maintain international competitiveness, and additional reporting requirements, were identified as challenges on the horizon. The public sector also identified challenges around funding.

- **Diverse Student Needs.** The biggest challenge identified by participants was the increasing diversity of student needs and expectations.
    o First Nations are the fastest growing student population. To support post-secondary education achievement for this population, it was expressed that institutions need to ensure that there are appropriate support structures in place to help students succeed. In addition, Aboriginal-controlled institutes need a mechanism to help facilitate recognition and credit transfer. It was suggested that the Province should establish long-term funding for programs that support Aboriginal students and consider how the quality assurance framework interfaces with the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework.
    o An increase in the international student population was also viewed as a challenge because they require different types of support to succeed.
    o In addition, institutions must also be responsive to changing student expectations of where, when and how education is delivered.

- **International Competitiveness.** Institutions stressed the need for a quality assurance system to maintain relevancy and consistent quality assurance processes that are recognized as best practices internationally. Institutions invest a lot of resources to meet the Province's quality assurance obligations and there should be some consideration given to whether the quality assurance system serves the needs of institutions. For example, is there a need that is not being met that is driving some institutions to seek American regional accreditation? Participants encouraged the Ministry to look at other quality assurance systems, adopt the best practices, and become a leader in quality assurance. To increase B.C.'s competitiveness, some participants advocated adopting the term *accreditation* and rebranding the Education Quality Assurance designation. Accreditation should indicate quality assurance validation and authority for the

institution to operate, and it would also provide recognition for lesser-known institutions in international markets where the term is widely understood.

- **Additional Reporting Requirements.** Participants raised the concern about additional reporting requirements should a new quality assurance framework be implemented. Current reporting obligations are viewed as onerous and burdensome. For the Private Career Training Institutions Agency (PCTIA) institutions, it was noted that there should be rigour in quality standards but it should not be unnecessarily burdensome. For public institutions, the reporting requirements are viewed as repetitive and redundant. It was suggested that PCTIA and the Ministry consolidate or streamline reporting requirements by considering what is truly necessary for quality assessment and considering how the data collected can be used for multiple purposes. Institutions clearly stated there needs to be clear rationale for any new or additional reporting requirements and that they should add value to the quality of education. Public institutions also expressed a desire for the Ministry to make data public to allow for comparisons between institutions and institutions across sectors.

- **Funding.** Public institutions stated that funding policies and limits are barriers to improving transfer, supporting students and building institutional capacity, including resources to collect data and conduct institutional research. Public institutions indicated that they face unnecessary constraints that make it difficult to increase their revenues independent of government funding.

Improvements

Overall, participants encouraged the ministry to maintain the momentum it has established and to continue making quality assurance a priority. In the approach to change, participants discussed the minimal approach and the full-scale approach. There was general agreement in the approaches to change, with the exception of the use of accreditation. Participants viewed use of accreditation to signal government validation of a program as both the minimal approach and the full-scale approach.

Some participants also raised the issue of a national approach to quality assurance. Government reiterated its willingness to continue working with the provinces and territories through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.

In identifying the approach to change, there was not one specific improvement for each challenge; rather, it was a collection of improvements that would help facilitate institutional response and action. As part of the minimal approach to change, participants suggested that government begin to address the following points:

- **Improve program review processes.** Revise reporting and program reviews to be more outcomes focused, add a follow-up mechanism rather than focussing only on program approval, speed up the timeline for degree approval, and orient review panels in widely-accepted peer review practices. Review processes should support institutions to be more innovative, entrepreneurial and responsive to student and community needs.

- **Support educational quality improvement.** Adopt an iterative approach and support institutions towards quality improvement. Government can provide resources and a platform for institutions to exchange ideas on internal quality control and management and to learn from each other.

- **Adopt proportionate quality assurance oversight where good institutions undergo an institutional review rather than program reviews.** Institutions are committed to educational

quality. For institutions that have demonstrated strong internal quality control and management, quality assurance oversight should focus on audits of the institution's quality assessment policies and practices.

- **Greater transparency.** Standards and processes need to be clearly stated with explicit expectations, outcomes, and timelines. Private career-training institutions expressed a desire for greater accountability in the management of the Student Training Completion Fund, more transparency on why PCTIA is requesting information, and greater consideration of current and new regulatory obligations.

- **Increase cooperation between organizations and align processes when possible when undertaking quality assurance.** There need to be clear roles and responsibilities for various bodies (e.g., government, crowns, and regulatory bodies) engaged in quality assurance to avoid duplication and inconsistent standards.

In general, full-scale change was viewed as a single quality assurance framework that recognizes the uniqueness of each sector with a single quality assurance body responsible for quality assurance across the province. The frequency and intensity of quality reviews would be proportionate to strength of the institution's internal program quality control and management.

NEXT STEPS

Quality assurance and student protection remain a priority for government. Government is committed to working with the system to strengthen the quality assurance for the post-secondary education system. Areas clearly identified for improvement during the consultations will inform the next steps of the process. In consultation with the system, government will determine how to proceed, including appropriate timelines for implementation. Also, in keeping with government's commitment to a more collaborative and inclusive approach, government will continue working with the sectors to identify ongoing problems and solutions to enhance the quality of their respective sectors. Part of this process will be determining roles and responsibilities of the institutions, sectors, and government, in ensuring students receive the education promised by the institution.

Government also has commitments relating to quality assurance that were made through the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and the International Education Strategy. In addition, the Province has obligations for the International Student Program once the federal government regulations come into effect in spring 2014. Government will also work to fulfil these commitments and obligations through regulatory and/or policy changes.

RESEARCH UNIVERITIES' COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION

MEETING NOTE BACKGROUND

The Research Universities' Council of British Columba has been active in the Quality Assurance Framework Consultations. A summary of its submissions is provided. The documents submitted by RUCBC form the appendix.

WAVE 1

- The submission encouraged AVED to build on the existing strengths of the public post-secondary system and provided a summary of the quality assurance undertaken at RUCBC institutions.
- Member institutions have "highly developed quality assurance system" which includes: regular, systematic, internal and external reviews of all academic programs every 5-7 years; independent review of accreditation by professional bodies for professional programs; rigorous internal and external review of new academic programs (including the DQAB process) as well as existing programs that undergo a major revision; and ongoing student outcomes surveys and assessment of student based and academic quality metrics (e.g., faculty evaluations, support services).
- Quality assurance processes differ across the member institutions; however, they generally share common features:
    - Self-study by the unit, coupled with institutional data,
    - Document and levels and trends of student enrolment/demand,
    - Completion times and graduation rates for degree programs,
    - Student satisfaction surveys (e.g., National Survey of Student Engagement, Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey, course evaluations),
    - Student outcomes surveys for degree programs (provincial 2 and 5 year post-graduation surveys of employment level and skills),
    - Labour market demand and employer satisfaction, when available,
    - A site visit by external reviewers, where the following are reviewed:
        - Currency and relevancy of program content and focus,
        - Articulation of learning objectives and outcomes,
        - Opportunities for experiential learning,
        - Skills development (e.g., effective written and oral communication)
    - Follow-up including a response to the expert reviewer report and typically, an action plan to improve program quality.

WAVE 2

RUCBC suggested the following principles underpin the quality assurance framework:

- **Differentiation:** Reflect differentiation within the sector and have definitions, standards and processes that are sector specific.
- **Clear and transparent:** Clear definitions of quality. Transparent institutional data, that institutions would self-report, to provide information to students and the public on the quality assurance processes within institutions.
- **Regulatory risk**: Focus on institutional processes and whether institutions have robust internal mechanisms in place. For low risk institutions, government's role is to monitor consistency of application and effectiveness of the quality assurance processes.
    - o Risk factors should not include size or student loan default rate.
- **Continuous quality improvement:** Enable institutions to use the quality assurance process for improvement.
- **Expertise-based** underpins the quality assurance process, as recommended in the Stubbs Report.

WAVE 3

RUCBC provided the following in response to the Green Paper:
- Support many principles and components of the proposed framework.
- Do not support:
    - o Framework tries to encompass too many elements not directly related to quality assurance.
    - o Question the effectiveness of one framework for the system, use of the 5-level maturity model, and streamlining existing processes for quality assurance.

In response, AVED noted that:
- Purpose of the Green Paper is to stimulate discussion and proposed policy directions are open for public consultation.
- AVED appreciates and values RUCBC's continued engagement in the Quality Assurance Framework discussions and that of its member institutions.
- Consultations will continue after April.

From:	Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Sent:	Tuesday, September 3, 2013 4:46 PM
To:	Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Cc:	Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject:	Meeting with RUCBC

Hi Val,

Here is information for your and Ian's meeting tomorrow with RUCBC. Although it is not mapped, it will be the basis of mapping the other two sectors against their mature standards for your two meetings scheduled for next week.

The attached will provide you with what RUCBC has been responding with respect to the ISP changes.

RUCBC meeting
note Sept 3.docx...

Appendix.pdf

Thanks,

Dorothy

* * * * * * * *

Dorothy Rogers
Director
Quality Assurance Unit, DQAB Secretariat
Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education
250-387-6298

THE Research
Universities' Council
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 30, 2012

Mr. Tony Loughran
Executive Director, Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
PO Box 9883 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9T6

Dear Mr. Loughran,

I am writing on behalf of the members of The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia in response to the proposed "Quality Assurance of Post Secondary Education Framework". Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

The research universities share the Ministry of Advanced Education's commitment to quality within the post secondary system in British Columbia and support the development of a quality assurance framework. Providing students with the academic programs that allow them to develop the knowledge, skills and experience for future success is central to the mission of the research universities. Bicameral governance and transparent, consistent and effective policies and practices ensure program quality and learning outcomes for students.

The statutory provisions of the *University Act* vest the Board of Governors with the management, administration and control of the universities while matters of academic governance are vested in the Senate of the University. From an institutional operating perspective the *Act* gives authority to the universities for academic policies and standards.

British Columbia's research universities have a highly developed quality assurance system, which includes: regular, systematic, internal and external reviews of all academic programs every five to seven years; independent review for accreditation by professional bodies for professional programs, including engineering, business, and medicine and other health related programs; rigorous internal and external review of new academic programs and approval through the Degree Quality Assessment Board in an open and transparent process; and ongoing student outcomes surveys and assessments of student based and academic quality metrics.   (Further details are provided in Appendix 1.)

... / 2.

UBC   SFU   University of Victoria   U*NBC   ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY   THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

The high quality of British Columbia's public post secondary system is recognized nationally and internationally. It is important that a new quality assurance framework reflect and build on the existing strengths of the public post secondary system and recognize the differing types of institutions within the broader system. The framework should account for differences in legislatively or self-defined institutional missions and goals in order to set the parameters for assessment of standards.

Developing a new quality assurance framework is complex and requires careful consultation with all stakeholders. A longer timeframe would allow the significant issues implied by the framework to be canvassed thoroughly and avoid unintended consequences. It will also be critical to draw on the significant expertise within the public post secondary institutions and within the broader post secondary system in the development of the framework.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. The research universities are committed to working with the Ministry in a substantive consultation process on the framework.

Sincerely,

R. Ciceri

Robin Ciceri
President

copy : Stephen Toope, President, The University of British Columbia
        Andrew Petter, President, Simon Fraser University
        David Turpin, President, University of Victoria
        George Iwama, President, University of Northern British Columbia
        Allan Cahoon, President, Royal Roads University
        Alan Shaver, President, Thompson Rivers University
        David Farrar, Vice President, Academic, The University of British Columbia
        Jonathan Driver, Vice President, Academic, Simon Fraser University
        Reeta Tremblay, Vice President, Academic, University of Victoria
        Mark Dale, Vice President, Academic, University of Northern British Columbia
        Steve Grundy, Vice President, Academic, Royal Roads University
        Ulrich Scheck, Vice President, Academic, Thompson Rivers University
        Doug Owram, Principal, The Univeristy of British Columbia, Okanagan

Research Universities of British Columbia: Committed Quality Assurance

Providing academic programs of the highest quality is a common goal among the research universities. As such, quality assurance is an integral and important focus of university review processes. The research universities already engage in a broad range of institutional and programmatic review practices. These review practices are designed to assure:

- That institutions are developing and offering degrees of quality that will be recognized nationally and internationally;
- Consistent, equitable, transparent and effective processes to ensure program quality and outcomes for students.

The research universities are committed to providing students with the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills and experience essential to becoming productive and engaged citizens within a global context. In pursuit of this goal, they support the development of skills and capacities that have been identified as critical to their future success, in the context of a research intensive environment that support students and faculty in the development and dissemination of new knowledge and creative activity. Intellectual, academic and practical skills include:

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Effective written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Problem solving
- Collaboration skills and the ability to work in teams

Personal and social responsibility capacities include:

- Civic engagement and understanding – local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action

Achievement of these goals is obtained through:

- Academic and co-curricular programs of the highest quality
- Integration of research and teaching across the curriculum
- Practise and support of relevant skills in the context of progressively more challenging problems, assignments, projects, and standards for performance
- Opportunities for experiential and work-integrated learning
- Active engagement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

Following are a set of activities that the research universities regularly engage in to achieve these goals.

1) **Academic Program Reviews**

All of the research intensive universities engage in regular, systematic, internal and external reviews of all academic programs every 5-7 years. Academic Program Review processes differ to minor degrees across institutions, but generally share the following common features:

- An extensive self-study by the unit, coupled with institutional data,
- Documentation of levels and trends of student enrolment/demand,
- Completion times and graduation rates for degrees,
- Indications of student satisfaction with the program and of the quality of instruction (National Survey of Student Engagement – NSSE; Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey - CGPSS; results of course experience surveys or other forms of course evaluations, etc.),
- Results of provincial 2 and 5 year post-graduation surveys of employment levels and skills obtained in degree programs,
- Indications of labour market demand and employer satisfaction when available
- A site visit by external experts in the particular field of study from other universities in the province, in other parts of Canada, or other countries,
- Reports prepared by external reviewers address:
    o The currency and relevancy of program content and focus,
    o The articulation of learning objective and outcomes,
    o Opportunities for experiential learning
    o Demonstration of program features designed to develop skills in effective written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, critical and creative thinking, inquiry and analysis, problem solving and the ability to work in teams,

Follow-up on academic program reviews include an analysis and response to the reports of external reviewers and typically result in a series of action steps designed to improve program quality and support continued investment in the program, or to reduce or eliminate programs that do not have sufficient quality or student demand.

2) **Accreditation of Professional Programs**

Many professional programs undergo independent review for accreditation by professional bodies. These include engineering, business, medicine and other health related programs (e.g., nursing, clinical, counselling and school psychology, social work, etc.). Accreditation reviews include extensive reviews of learning outcomes, student outcomes in terms of registration/licensure in the profession and levels of employment.

3) **Review of New Academic Programs**

All new academic programs undergo rigorous internal and external review and are approved through the Degree Quality Assessment Board in an open and transparent process. It should also be noted that in addition to new programs, any existing program that undergoes a major revision is captured by this review system.

- 2 -

4) **Provincial Post-Graduate Surveys**

The provincial 2 and 5-year post-graduation surveys gather outcomes data on all university graduates and are extremely valuable to the universities and to informing government. They provide consistent and regular data with respect to:

- student employment levels, career categories, and salaries obtained,
- further education sought including graduate degrees and professional certifications,
- skills developed and the relevance of those skills to the workplace

This information is regularly reviewed by institutions and program directors and is incorporated into academic program reviews and program planning exercises.

5) **Ongoing Assessment of Student Based Quality Metrics**

All universities engage in regular ongoing activities and analyses designed to address program quality:

- Course experience surveys or other forms of course evaluation are commonly obtained for every undergraduate course:
    - Instructor preparedness, availability, and effectiveness
    - Clarity of course structure and design, student engagement, relevancy of skills developed
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), typically undertaken for students at the 1st and 4th year level, include key indicators of program quality such as:
    - Level of academic challenge
    - Level of active and collaborative learning
    - Level of student-faculty interaction
    - Level of enriching educational experiences
    - Supportive campus environment

6) **Commitment to Transfer of Academic Credit Across Institutions**

The research universities fully support and work to ensure seamless transfers and transitions across the post-secondary sector.

- The BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) which oversees and manages the articulation process has representatives from the university sector at all levels
- Universities are now designated as both sending and receiving institutions and work diligently to maintain articulation agreements across the sector

7) **Engagement in Provincially Supported Career Planning**

The universities are fully represented in the Program Planner for students. This service, supported through BCCAT, provides students, parents and employers with detailed information about post-secondary programs, courses required, costs, availability, career development, salary levels that can be anticipated, etc.

- 3 -

8) **Ongoing Assessment of Academic Quality Metrics**

The research universities also regularly review many factors related to program quality:
- Annual review of the teaching performance of faculty and sessional instructors
- Class/course size
- Flexibility of access (e.g., face-to-face, blended or online access)
- Integration of educational technologies to improve learning outcomes
- Effectiveness of academic advising
- Effectiveness of career advising and development
- Access to learning supports (writing and math support, library support, study space)
- Curricular reviews to ensure clear, coherent pathways, including foundational and capstone courses, that support program completion and the achievement of learning outcomes
- Support of research programs that evaluate the effectiveness of teaching innovations (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning – SoTL)
- Regular reviews of grading practices and grading integrity

9) **Commitment to Accessibility**

The research universities also engage in regular reviews of accessibility and affordability, reviewing the levels of tuition, participation rates across income levels, debt levels and times to debt elimination, etc.

The research universities also have robust programs of scholarships, bursaries, merit and financially based, to support student enrolment and success.

10) **Full Engagement in Student Mobility and Transfer**

The research universities are full participants in the ongoing Student Transitions Project (STP) which monitors, assesses, and reports on the transitions of BC high school students into the public post-secondary system, their success rates (credential completion) and the ease with which they can move about the system.

11) **Annual Review of Service Plans and Achievement of Ministry Targets**

The research universities provide an annual Accountability Plan and Report to the Minister, including their achievement with respect to goals articulated by the Ministry over the last year (enrolment, graduation rates, etc.).

In sum, the research universities concur with the Ministry's commitment to assurance quality within the post-secondary system. The research universities have demonstrated continued evidence of quality through their provincial, national and international reputations, and have incorporated and embraced practices to document and make available evidence of the quality of their programs.

THE Research
Universities' Council
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 28, 2012

Mr. Ian Rongve
Assistant Deputy Minister
Sector Strategy & Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
P O Box 9191 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E6

Dear Mr. Rongve,

The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) appreciates the opportunity to respond to the June 20, 2012 Framework document and is submitting this letter on behalf of its member institutions.

As conveyed in my letter of April 30, 2012, the research universities share the Ministry of Advanced Education's commitment to quality within the post secondary system in British Columbia and support the development of a rigorous quality assurance framework. British Columbia's research universities have highly developed quality assurance systems, which include regular, systematic, internal and external reviews of all academic programs every five to seven years; independent review for accreditation by professional bodies for professional programs, including engineering, business, and medicine and other health related programs; rigorous internal and external review of new academic programs and approval through the Degree Quality Assessment Board in an open and transparent process; and ongoing student outcomes surveys and assessments of student based and academic quality metrics.

RUCBC agrees that the current system of Quality Assurance, which has evolved incrementally, contains gaps and inconsistencies and requires modification in order to:

a. Make quality assurance applicable across the entire post-secondary system (public and private).
b. Make quality assurance transparent and understandable to institutions, stakeholders and students, including international students. The actions of even a private, small institution can affect the reputation of British Columbia and Canada as a destination for high quality education.
c. Recognize the growing inter-provincial interest in coordinated initiatives, dating back to the Ministerial statement of 2007 as well as the Alberta-British Columbia Protocol of Co-operation of 2003.

UBC   SFU   University of Victoria   UNBC   ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY   THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

RUCBC supports an approach that reflects the following principles:

Differentiated

- The quality assurance framework should respect the institutional autonomy of universities as embedded in the *Universities Act* as essential to the academic quality of the institutions. Under the bicameral governance framework, the statutory provisions of the *University Act* vest the Board of Governors with the management, administration and control of the universities while matters of academic governance are vested in the Senate of the University. From an institutional operating perspective the *Act* gives authority to the universities for academic policies and standards.[1]

- The quality assurance framework should reflect the complexity of the post-secondary system and differences between sectors. While it should be possible to organize quality assurance for the Province under an overarching umbrella, the framework should reflect the differentiation within the sector and have definitions, standards and processes developed in ways that are sector specific. Adopting a "one size fits all" approach might, in fact, have the perverse effect of driving quality down.

Clear and Transparent

- "Quality" should be clearly defined and articulated with reference to each sector, as well as the roles and missions of different types of institutions.

- The transparency of institutional data should be part of a quality assurance framework. Given the difficulties encountered with the development of a pan-Canadian common data set, we are concerned that, in the absence of common definitions and approaches to learning analytics, presenting data in a comparative fashion may be problematic. Until such matters are addressed, it would be more appropriate to set up best practice expectations for institutions self-reporting.

Based on Smart Regulation and Risk

- The quality assurance framework should reflect the government's Straight Forward BC initiative and its tenets of deregulation and smart regulation. As government notes, smart regulation "is focused on achieving the intent and outcome of regulations while prescribing fewer processes and procedures".

- Increased quality regulation and assurance should be focused on those institutions that pose the greatest risk to students and to the reputation of education in the Province. Many, if not all, of the established government funded institutions already have very well established and robust quality assurance measures. Rather than develop new quality

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[1] The *Royal Roads Act* gives authority to the university for academic policy and standards through a unicameral governance structure.

assurance procedures, the focus should be on evaluating whether institutions have robust internal mechanisms in place and monitor consistency and effectiveness. Quality assurance efforts should then concentrate on those institutions without such processes in place and/or help them to develop them.

- RUCBC supports proportionate oversight as a function of an institution's risk. The level of risk should relate to an institution's history of teaching and research, student experiences, compliance with regulations and legislation, and internal quality assurance mechanisms. We do not agree that it should relate to size or to student financial assistance default rates, as employment is dependent on many factors.

- The framework should include key standards for quality indicators of quality assurance processes. Some of these will vary across the types of post-secondary institutions but appropriate external input should be a consistent dimension for such processes across the sector.

- Where institutions have a strong track record and firmly established quality assurance measures in place, government quality assurance should consist of obtaining and periodically updating information on these measures. The following questions might suffice for such low risk institutions.
  a) Does a new program face assessment beyond the unit to assure quality?
  b) Does that assessment include an academic as well as a financial/administrative review?
  c) Are the processes consistent and transparent?
  d) Does the institution have a track-record of using such reviews that has been firmly established?
  e) What other measures does the institution have in place for assuring quality of its programs?

- For institutions where there are higher risks, a review process similar to that in place within the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) could be adopted in such situations:
  1. Where the institution does not meet the standards set out above in terms of internal processes.
  2. Where the institution has not previously been captured under current DQAB processes or exemption criteria.
  3. Where the institution is expanding its mandate in significant fashion to offer a new level of post-secondary education. Examples might include offering baccalaureate degrees for the first time or adding masters or doctoral degrees.

Enabling

- The framework should be designed to encourage and support quality improvement. As such, it needs to do more than just assess quality; it should enable institutions to use it for improvement.

Expert-Based

- Bodies responsible for the audits of quality assurance processes and/or quality assurance reviews of programs should be expertise-based. This expertise should be calibrated to each sector's needs and, in each case, reflect the level of degrees/credentials that are being proposed/implemented. While there is value in stakeholders' input on many issues related to post-secondary education in the Province, quality assurance bodies should comprise of individuals with expertise relevant to the assessment of quality. This is consistent with the position taken in the Dr. John Stubbs report on BC's degree approval process.

- It would not be workable to develop government led initiatives, even at arm's length such as in a crown corporation, that would adjudicate student complaints, tuition rebates, etc. Most, if not all, of the established institutions have clear and transparent policies with respect to appeals about which students are made aware. Institutions that do not publish clear guidelines with respect to student protection could be required to do so. Related to this, there is no reason to require that tuition refund policy should be identical among institutions or, for that matter, among programs.

Well-Planned, Coherent and Integrated

- Given the significance, scope and complexity of this undertaking, the process of developing the quality assurance framework should not be rushed and requires adequate time to be successfully completed. Given the differentiation of the sector, it may be helpful to employ working groups with academic and administrative expertise relevant to the different types of institutions to: address the definitional questions; develop models for quality assurance focused on the salient criteria derived from these definitions; describe the relevant attributes of quality; and devise criteria with appropriate performance standards. These common components would then need to be integrated under a common umbrella of the British Columbia quality assurance system.

- As the new framework is being developed, the role, processes and composition of other quality assurance-related mechanisms, bodies and designations should be reviewed and included, including DQAB and Education Quality Assurance (EQA). The new quality assurance framework should encompass all these functions and requirements in a coherent fashion that avoids redundancies and ensures that each step in the process contributes to quality. This, of course, is consistent with the government's commitment to its "Lean" initiative.

- With respect to the proposal to strengthen the EQA designation criteria, it is difficult to understand how this would work. Would long-established research universities share such a brand with small private institutions who have met certain minimal standards? Such 'branding' will not add to the reputation to many of the well-established universities and colleges. Careful consideration should also be given to the structure and governance of any organization responsible for quality assurance given the differences in governance, risks and size of institutions, both public and private.

To summarize, we believe it makes sense to focus increased quality regulation and assurance on those institutions that pose the greatest risk to students and to the reputation of education in the Province. The quality assurance framework should evaluate whether institutions have robust internal mechanisms in place and then concentrate on those institutions without such processes in place and/or help them to develop them.

We encourage ongoing discussion with the sector and its institutions as the process moves from principles to implementation. Their insight and experience will be very valuable to the government as this process is further developed. RUCBC and its member institutions will be pleased to identify key leaders and experts in this area.

As we mentioned in our April letter, we have a real interest in working together with the government in enhancing and securing the Province's reputation for quality education.

Yours truly,

Robin Ciceri
President

copy:

Cheryl Wenezenki-Yolland, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Advanced Education
Stephen Toope, President, University of British Columbia
Andrew Petter, President, Simon Fraser University
David Turpin, President, University of Victoria
George Iwama, President, University of Northern British Columbia
Allan Cahoon, President, Royal Roads University
Alan Shaver, President, Thompson Rivers University
David Farrar, Provost & Vice-President Academic, University of British Columbia
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Mark Dale, Vice-President Academic & Provost, University of Northern British Columbia
Deborah Buszard, Deputy Vice Chancellor & Principal, University of British Columbia, Okanagan
Steve Grundy, Vice-President Academic & Provost, Royal Roads University
Ulrich Scheck, Provost & Vice-President Academic, Thompson Rivers University

THE Research
Universities' Council
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

March 19, 2013

Mr. Ian Rongve
Assistant Deputy Minister
Sector Strategy & Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology
P O Box 9191 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E6

Dear Mr. Rongve,

The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) is writing in response to your letter of March 4, 2013 and the distribution of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology's *Green Paper on a BC Quality Assurance Framework.* We appreciate the work undertaken by the Ministry on the Green Paper.

As you know, the research universities share the Ministry's commitment to high quality within the post-secondary education system in British Columbia. The research universities support a framework that provides information to students and to the public on the processes within institutions and how these demonstrate quality assurance on a continuous basis.

There are many principles and components underpinning the framework described by the Green Paper which we support; however, there is a concern that the framework tries to encompass too many elements which are not directly relevant to quality assurance and that the model, in its current state, will not best serve the objectives and outcomes intended.

The framework also includes some elements that require additional discussion, including the question of one framework for the entire system, the use of the five-level "maturity" model, and the approach to streamlining existing processes for quality assurance.

... /2.

UBC   SFU   University   UNBC   Royal Roads   THOMPSON RIVERS
                          of Victoria   UNIVERSITY   UNIVERSITY

Given the significance of the topic and its complexity, we believe the consultation period on the Green Paper needs to be extended. It is important that the timeframe allow for dialogue within the system as well as between senior officials in the Ministry with institutional leaders. Therefore, the research universities will not be in a position to provide a response by April 12, 2013 and ask that you extend the consultation period.

We would like to reiterate our interest in working together with the Ministry to develop a framework for quality assurance within the provincial post-secondary education system and look forward to future discussions on this matter.

Yours truly,

R. Ciceri

Robin Ciceri
President

copy: Cheryl Wenezenki-Yolland, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Advanced Education
         Stephen Toope, President, University of British Columbia
         Andrew Petter, President, Simon Fraser University
         David Turpin, President, University of Victoria
         George Iwama, President, University of Northern British Columbia
         Allan Cahoon, President, Royal Roads University
         Alan Shaver, President, Thompson Rivers University
         Vice Presidents Academic, The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia

APR 0 9 2013   Our Ref. 94702

Ms. Robin Ciceri, President
The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia
400 – 880 Douglas St
Victoria BC V8W 2B7

Dear Ms. Ciceri:

Thank you for your letter of March 19, 2013 regarding the Quality Assurance Framework Green
Paper and for providing some initial feedback on the policy directions contained in the paper.

I appreciate the issues you raised and I assure you that the Ministry of Advanced Education,
Innovation and Technology ("Ministry") is committed to developing an effective quality
assurance framework for British Columbia's vast, differentiated, and diverse system.

The Green Paper is intended to stimulate discussion on possible policy directions and the
proposals outlined are open for public consultation. I am grateful for the advice and suggestions
provided by The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) as well as
RUCBC member institutions during the Green Paper Discussion Table held March 20 and 21.
I welcome further comments on supporting continuous quality improvement in the
British Columbia post-secondary education system and assure you that all feedback received by
the Ministry will be used to inform development of the Quality Assurance Framework.
Furthermore, the consultative process will not end in April. I have also committed to continuing
consultations throughout the spring and summer of 2013.

I appreciate RUCBC's interest in working with the Ministry and look forward to future
discussions on the Quality Assurance Framework. In particular, I hope RUCBC and its member
institutions will continue to actively participate in the next round of consultations.

Sincerely,

Ian Rongve, Ph.D.
Assistant Deputy Minister

Ministry of Advanced Education,   Sector Strategy and   Mailing Address: Location Address:
Innovation and Technology   Quality Assurance   PO Box 9157 Stn Prov Govt 3rd Floor – 835 Humboldt Street
                                     Division   Victoria BC V8W 9H2   Victoria BC V8V 4W8

                                                                                         Telephone: (250) 356-0826
                                                                                         Facsimile: (250) 356-5468

                                                                                         AED-2013-00135
                                                                                         Page 50

From:	Carnegie, Lynn AVED:EX
Sent:	Tuesday, September 3, 2013 11:58 AM
To:	Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Cc:	Lee, Ally AVED:EX
Subject:	RE: RUCBC correspondence

1155831[2].pdf

CLIFF 95174 came up (but it's a DN)

1141378[1].pdf   1145360[1].pdf

And CLIFF 94702 incoming and response attached

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2013 10:38 AM
To: Lee, Ally AVED:EX; Carnegie, Lynn AVED:EX
Subject: RUCBC correspondence
Importance: High

Hi Lynn and Ally,

Can either of you check to see if there was correspondence with the Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC), in CLIFF, between March 4, 2013 to July 31, 2013? This is a rush for Val's meeting tomorrow.

Thank you!
Dao

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia

Cell   s.17   Fax: (250) 387-3750

MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION
MEETING NOTE

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Amrik Virk
Minister of Advanced Education

DATE AND TIME OF MEETING: June 17, 2013 at 2:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES:
Professor Stephen Toope, President, University of British Columbia
Professor Andrew Petter, President, Simon Fraser University
Dr. David Turpin, President, University of Victoria
Dr. George Iwama, President, University of Northern British Columbia
Dr. Allan Cahoon, President, Royal Roads University
Dr. Alan Shaver, President Thompson Rivers University
Robin Ciceri, President, Research Universities' Council of British Columbia
Mr. James Gorman, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Advanced Education

ISSUE(S): The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia meet and greet

BACKGROUND:
The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) represents the province's
four research-intensive universities (University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University,
University of Victoria and University of Northern British Columbia) and two teaching-intensive
universities (Royal Roads University and Thompson Rivers University). RUCBC works with
and on behalf of its members to improve the quality, accessibility and coordination of university
education in British Columbia. It provides a single voice on behalf of the member universities
on public policy issues including funding, research, accountability, admissions and transfer.

(Note: Dr. Turpin, President, University of Victoria steps down on June 30, 2013 and Professor
Jamie Cassels will start as President on July 1, 2013. Professor Toope, President, University of
British Columbia, has announced he will be stepping down June 2014.)

DISCUSSION:

Not Responsive

Not Responsive

Quality Assurance

The Ministry has developed a revised Quality Assurance Framework to fulfill the *BC Jobs Plan* commitment to expand and strengthen post-secondary education quality assurance.

The Ministry has been engaged in consultations with the post-secondary education system since Spring 2012, and, most recently, following the release of the green paper in March 2013. The results and feedback of the third phase of consultations are currently being reviewed to inform the implementation of the provincial Quality Assurance Framework.

Delays in degree program approval have also been an issue over the last year. In addition, Ministry staff recently provided (May 2013) degree review guidelines to a number of institutions, including UBC. The guidelines outline an augment Ministry review process, focusing on system coordination and labour market analysis.

Not Responsive

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:

Not Responsive

Quality Assurance
- The Ministry has engaged in intensive consultations with the post-secondary education system since Spring 2012, and, most recently, following the release of the green paper in March 2013.
- We have learned a great many things in that period and have recognized a sense of discomfort and concern with the speed of the initiative. I can assure you that we want to get this important work right. I have asked my Deputy Minister to rethink the pace of this work and look towards targeting legislation at some future date, possibly Spring 2014.

- I have also been made aware of concerns expressed over the scope of the Quality Assurance Framework. So, we are taking what we've heard during the consultations and looking to review that aspect as well, so that any changes, whether legislative or otherwise, addresses the core problems we're attempting to resolve.

Not Responsive

Prepared by:	Nell Hodges, Director	Reviewed by:	
	Lower Mainland Region	Manager ·	
Phone #:		Director	NH
		Executive Director	AL
		Assistant Deputy Minister	AL for DM
		Deputy Minister	JG

Pages 56 through 59 redacted for the following reasons:
- -
Not Responsive

March 19, 2013

Mr. Ian Rongve
Assistant Deputy Minister
Sector Strategy & Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology
P O Box 9191 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E6

Dear Mr. Rongve,

The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) is writing in response to your letter of March 4, 2013 and the distribution of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology's *Green Paper on a BC Quality Assurance Framework.* We appreciate the work undertaken by the Ministry on the Green Paper.

As you know, the research universities share the Ministry's commitment to high quality within the post-secondary education system in British Columbia. The research universities support a framework that provides information to students and to the public on the processes within institutions and how these demonstrate quality assurance on a continuous basis.

There are many principles and components underpinning the framework described by the Green Paper which we support; however, there is a concern that the framework tries to encompass too many elements which are not directly relevant to quality assurance and that the model, in its current state, will not best serve the objectives and outcomes intended.

The framework also includes some elements that require additional discussion, including the question of one framework for the entire system, the use of the five-level "maturity" model, and the approach to streamlining existing processes for quality assurance.

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UBC   SFU   University   U/NBC   Royal Roads   THOMPSON RIVERS
                    of Victoria   UNIVERSITY   UNIVERSITY

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We would like to reiterate our interest in working together with the Ministry to develop a framework for quality assurance within the provincial post-secondary education system and look forward to future discussions on this matter.

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        Allan Cahoon, President, Royal Roads University
        Alan Shaver, President, Thompson Rivers University
        Vice Presidents Academic, The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia

APR 0 9 2013   Our Ref. 94702

Ms. Robin Ciceri, President
The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia
400 – 880 Douglas St
Victoria BC V8W 2B7

Dear Ms. Ciceri:

Thank you for your letter of March 19, 2013 regarding the Quality Assurance Framework Green
Paper and for providing some initial feedback on the policy directions contained in the paper.

I appreciate the issues you raised and I assure you that the Ministry of Advanced Education,
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assurance framework for British Columbia's vast, differentiated, and diverse system.

The Green Paper is intended to stimulate discussion on possible policy directions and the
proposals outlined are open for public consultation. I am grateful for the advice and suggestions
provided by The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) as well as
RUCBC member institutions during the Green Paper Discussion Table held March 20 and 21.
I welcome further comments on supporting continuous quality improvement in the
British Columbia post-secondary education system and assure you that all feedback received by
the Ministry will be used to inform development of the Quality Assurance Framework.
Furthermore, the consultative process will not end in April. I have also committed to continuing
consultations throughout the spring and summer of 2013.

I appreciate RUCBC's interest in working with the Ministry and look forward to future
discussions on the Quality Assurance Framework. In particular, I hope RUCBC and its member
institutions will continue to actively participate in the next round of consultations.

Sincerely,

Ian Rongve, Ph.D.
Assistant Deputy Minister

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2013 3:00 PM
To: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Subject: FW: Blair Littler
Attachments: RUCBC meeting note Sept 3.docx; Appendix.pdf

Hi Dorothy,

Attached is the formatted meeting note and the submissions compiled into an appendix.

Dao

Dao T. Luu
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia

Cell   s.17 | Fax: (250) 387-3750

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2013 1:02 PM
To: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Subject: RE: Blair Littler

Hi Dorothy,

RUCBC provided a submission in waves 1-3 (see attached). I've done a high level
summary.

WAVE 1
• The submission includes an appendix that provides a summary of the quality
  assurance undertaken at RUCBC institutions.
• Member institutions have "highly developed quality assurance system" which
  includes: regular, systematic, internal and external reviews of all academic
  programs every 5-7 years; independent review of accreditation by professional bodies
  for professional programs; rigorous internal and external review of new academic
  programs (including the DQAB process) as well as existing programs that undergo a
  major revision; and ongoing student outcomes surveys and assessment of student based
  and academic quality metrics (e.g., faculty evaluations, support support services).
• Quality assurance processes differ across the member institutions; however, they
  generally share common features:
    o Self-study by the unit, coupled with institutional data,
    o Document and levels and trends of student enrolment/demand,
    o Completion times and graduation rates for degrees,
    o Student satisfaction surveys (e.g., National Survey of Student Engagement,
       Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey, course evaluations),
    o Student outcomes surveys for degree programs (provincial 2 and 5 year post-
       graduation surveys of employment level and skills),
    o Labour market demand and employer satisfaction, when available,
    o A site visit by external reviewers, where the following are reviewed:
       ▪ Currency and relevancy of program content and focus,

- Articulation of leanring objectives and outcomes,
- Opportunities for experiential learning,
- Skills development (e.g., effective written and oral communication)
  o Follow-up including a response to the expert reviewers and typically, an action plan to improve program quality.

WAVE 2
Suggested principles for the quality assurance framework:
- **Differentiation**: Reflect differentiation within the secto and have difinitions, standards and processes that are sector specific.
- **Clear and transparent**: Clear definition of quality and transparency of institutional data.
- **Regulatory risk**: focus on institutional processes and whether institutions have robust internal mechanisms in place. Government's focus is to monitor consistency and effectiveness.
  o Risk factors should not include size or student loan default rate.
- **Continous quality improvement**: enable institutions to use the quality assurance process for improvement.
- **Expertise-based** underpins the quality assurance process, as recommended in the Stubbs Report.

WAVE 3
Green Paper response
- Support many principles and components of the framework.
- Do not support:
  o Framework tries to encompass to many elements not directly related to quality assurance.
  o Question the effectiveness of one framework for the system, use of the 5-level maturity model and streamlining existing processes for quality assurance.

Ministry response
- Purpose of the Green Paper is to stimulate discussion.
- Consultations will continue after April.

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia
Cell: s.17   Fax: (250) 387-3750

-----Original Message-----
From: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Sent: Monday, September 2, 2013 7:29 PM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: FW: Blair Littler

fyi

* * * * * * * *
Dorothy Rogers
Director
Quality Assurance Unit, DQAB Secretariat Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education
250-387-6298

-----Original Message-----
From: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Sent: Monday, September 2, 2013 7:28 PM
To: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: RE: Blair Littler

No, I don't think so. We will begin work tomorrow.

* * * * * * * *
Dorothy Rogers
Director
Quality Assurance Unit, DQAB Secretariat Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education
250-387-6298

-----Original Message-----
From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Sunday, September 1, 2013 9:01 AM
To: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Subject: Blair Littler

Hello Dorothy,

Ian and I are meeting with BL this week to chat about QA.

We have briefly chatted about mapping the current QA processes as a follow-up to the meeting with James, Ian, Robyn, Ruth, Jim and I.

Do you know if Dao has started to work on mapping any processes?

Val

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Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2013 1:02 PM
To: Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Subject: RE: Blair Littler
Attachments: Phase 1 RUCBC.pdf; Phase 1 RUCBC Appendix 1 - Quality Assurance Processes.pdf; Phase 2 RUCBC.pdf; AVED RUCBC response.pdf; Green Paper RUCBC.pdf

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DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia
Cell: Not Responsive | Fax: (250) 387-3750

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fyi

* * * * * * * *
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250-387-6298

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Sent: Sunday, September 1, 2013 9:01 AM

2

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Val

THE Research Universities' Council

OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 30, 2012

Mr. Tony Loughran
Executive Director, Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
PO Box 9883 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9T6

Dear Mr. Loughran,

I am writing on behalf of the members of The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia in response to the proposed "Quality Assurance of Post Secondary Education Framework". Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

The research universities share the Ministry of Advanced Education's commitment to quality within the post secondary system in British Columbia and support the development of a quality assurance framework. Providing students with the academic programs that allow them to develop the knowledge, skills and experience for future success is central to the mission of the research universities. Bicameral governance and transparent, consistent and effective policies and practices ensure program quality and learning outcomes for students.

The statutory provisions of the *University Act* vest the Board of Governors with the management, administration and control of the universities while matters of academic governance are vested in the Senate of the University. From an institutional operating perspective the *Act* gives authority to the universities for academic policies and standards.

British Columbia's research universities have a highly developed quality assurance system, which includes: regular, systematic, internal and external reviews of all academic programs every five to seven years; independent review for accreditation by professional bodies for professional programs, including engineering, business, and medicine and other health related programs; rigorous internal and external review of new academic programs and approval through the Degree Quality Assessment Board in an open and transparent process; and ongoing student outcomes surveys and assessments of student based and academic quality metrics. (Further details are provided in Appendix 1.)

... / 2.

University
of Victoria

UNBC

ROYAL ROADS
UNIVERSITY

THOMPSON RIVERS
UNIVERSITY

The high quality of British Columbia's public post secondary system is recognized nationally and internationally. It is important that a new quality assurance framework reflect and build on the existing strengths of the public post secondary system and recognize the differing types of institutions within the broader system. The framework should account for differences in legislatively or self-defined institutional missions and goals in order to set the parameters for assessment of standards.

Developing a new quality assurance framework is complex and requires careful consultation with all stakeholders. A longer timeframe would allow the significant issues implied by the framework to be canvassed thoroughly and avoid unintended consequences. It will also be critical to draw on the significant expertise within the public post secondary institutions and within the broader post secondary system in the development of the framework.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. The research universities are committed to working with the Ministry in a substantive consultation process on the framework.

Sincerely,

R. Ciceri

Robin Ciceri
President

copy :   Stephen Toope, President, The University of British Columbia
         Andrew Petter, President, Simon Fraser University
         David Turpin, President, University of Victoria
         George Iwama, President, University of Northern British Columbia
         Allan Cahoon, President, Royal Roads University
         Alan Shaver, President, Thompson Rivers University
         David Farrar, Vice President, Academic, The University of British Columbia
         Jonathan Driver, Vice President, Academic, Simon Fraser University
         Reeta Tremblay, Vice President, Academic, University of Victoria
         Mark Dale, Vice President, Academic, University of Northern British Columbia
         Steve Grundy, Vice President, Academic, Royal Roads University
         Ulrich Scheck, Vice President, Academic, Thompson Rivers University
         Doug Owram, Principal, The Univeristy of British Columbia, Okanagan

THE Research
Universities' Council
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 28, 2012

Mr. Ian Rongve
Assistant Deputy Minister
Sector Strategy & Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
P O Box 9191 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E6

Dear Mr. Rongve,

The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) appreciates the opportunity to respond to the June 20, 2012 Framework document and is submitting this letter on behalf of its member institutions.

As conveyed in my letter of April 30, 2012, the research universities share the Ministry of Advanced Education's commitment to quality within the post secondary system in British Columbia and support the development of a rigorous quality assurance framework. British Columbia's research universities have highly developed quality assurance systems, which include regular, systematic, internal and external reviews of all academic programs every five to seven years; independent review for accreditation by professional bodies for professional programs, including engineering, business, and medicine and other health related programs; rigorous internal and external review of new academic programs and approval through the Degree Quality Assessment Board in an open and transparent process; and ongoing student outcomes surveys and assessments of student based and academic quality metrics.

RUCBC agrees that the current system of Quality Assurance, which has evolved incrementally, contains gaps and inconsistencies and requires modification in order to:

a. Make quality assurance applicable across the entire post-secondary system (public and private).
b. Make quality assurance transparent and understandable to institutions, stakeholders and students, including international students. The actions of even a private, small institution can affect the reputation of British Columbia and Canada as a destination for high quality education.
c. Recognize the growing inter-provincial interest in coordinated initiatives, dating back to the Ministerial statement of 2007 as well as the Alberta-British Columbia Protocol of Co-operation of 2003.

UBC   SFU   University of Victoria   UNBC   ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY   THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

RUCBC supports an approach that reflects the following principles:

Differentiated

- The quality assurance framework should respect the institutional autonomy of universities as embedded in the *Universities Act* as essential to the academic quality of the institutions. Under the bicameral governance framework, the statutory provisions of the *University Act* vest the Board of Governors with the management, administration and control of the universities while matters of academic governance are vested in the Senate of the University. From an institutional operating perspective the *Act* gives authority to the universities for academic policies and standards.[1]

- The quality assurance framework should reflect the complexity of the post-secondary system and differences between sectors. While it should be possible to organize quality assurance for the Province under an overarching umbrella, the framework should reflect the differentiation within the sector and have definitions, standards and processes developed in ways that are sector specific. Adopting a "one size fits all" approach might, in fact, have the perverse effect of driving quality down.

Clear and Transparent

- "Quality" should be clearly defined and articulated with reference to each sector, as well as the roles and missions of different types of institutions.

- The transparency of institutional data should be part of a quality assurance framework. Given the difficulties encountered with the development of a pan-Canadian common data set, we are concerned that, in the absence of common definitions and approaches to learning analytics, presenting data in a comparative fashion may be problematic. Until such matters are addressed, it would be more appropriate to set up best practice expectations for institutions self-reporting.

Based on Smart Regulation and Risk

- The quality assurance framework should reflect the government's Straight Forward BC initiative and its tenets of deregulation and smart regulation. As government notes, smart regulation "is focused on achieving the intent and outcome of regulations while prescribing fewer processes and procedures".

- Increased quality regulation and assurance should be focused on those institutions that pose the greatest risk to students and to the reputation of education in the Province. Many, if not all, of the established government funded institutions already have very well established and robust quality assurance measures. Rather than develop new quality

---

[1] The *Royal Roads Act* gives authority to the university for academic policy and standards through a unicameral governance structure.

assurance procedures, the focus should be on evaluating whether institutions have robust internal mechanisms in place and monitor consistency and effectiveness. Quality assurance efforts should then concentrate on those institutions without such processes in place and/or help them to develop them.

- RUCBC supports proportionate oversight as a function of an institution's risk. The level of risk should relate to an institution's history of teaching and research, student experiences, compliance with regulations and legislation, and internal quality assurance mechanisms. We do not agree that it should relate to size or to student financial assistance default rates, as employment is dependent on many factors.

- The framework should include key standards for quality indicators of quality assurance processes. Some of these will vary across the types of post-secondary institutions but appropriate external input should be a consistent dimension for such processes across the sector.

- Where institutions have a strong track record and firmly established quality assurance measures in place, government quality assurance should consist of obtaining and periodically updating information on these measures. The following questions might suffice for such low risk institutions.
  a) Does a new program face assessment beyond the unit to assure quality?
  b) Does that assessment include an academic as well as a financial/administrative review?
  c) Are the processes consistent and transparent?
  d) Does the institution have a track-record of using such reviews that has been firmly established?
  e) What other measures does the institution have in place for assuring quality of its programs?

- For institutions where there are higher risks, a review process similar to that in place within the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) could be adopted in such situations:
  1. Where the institution does not meet the standards set out above in terms of internal processes.
  2. Where the institution has not previously been captured under current DQAB processes or exemption criteria.
  3. Where the institution is expanding its mandate in significant fashion to offer a new level of post-secondary education. Examples might include offering baccalaureate degrees for the first time or adding masters or doctoral degrees.

Enabling

- The framework should be designed to encourage and support quality improvement. As such, it needs to do more than just assess quality; it should enable institutions to use it for improvement.

Expert-Based

- Bodies responsible for the audits of quality assurance processes and/or quality assurance reviews of programs should be expertise-based. This expertise should be calibrated to each sector's needs and, in each case, reflect the level of degrees/credentials that are being proposed/implemented. While there is value in stakeholders' input on many issues related to post-secondary education in the Province, quality assurance bodies should comprise of individuals with expertise relevant to the assessment of quality. This is consistent with the position taken in the Dr. John Stubbs report on BC's degree approval process.

- It would not be workable to develop government led initiatives, even at arm's length such as in a crown corporation, that would adjudicate student complaints, tuition rebates, etc. Most, if not all, of the established institutions have clear and transparent policies with respect to appeals about which students are made aware. Institutions that do not publish clear guidelines with respect to student protection could be required to do so. Related to this, there is no reason to require that tuition refund policy should be identical among institutions or, for that matter, among programs.

Well-Planned, Coherent and Integrated

- Given the significance, scope and complexity of this undertaking, the process of developing the quality assurance framework should not be rushed and requires adequate time to be successfully completed. Given the differentiation of the sector, it may be helpful to employ working groups with academic and administrative expertise relevant to the different types of institutions to: address the definitional questions; develop models for quality assurance focused on the salient criteria derived from these definitions; describe the relevant attributes of quality; and devise criteria with appropriate performance standards. These common components would then need to be integrated under a common umbrella of the British Columbia quality assurance system.

- As the new framework is being developed, the role, processes and composition of other quality assurance-related mechanisms, bodies and designations should be reviewed and included, including DQAB and Education Quality Assurance (EQA). The new quality assurance framework should encompass all these functions and requirements in a coherent fashion that avoids redundancies and ensures that each step in the process contributes to quality. This, of course, is consistent with the government's commitment to its "Lean" initiative.

- With respect to the proposal to strengthen the EQA designation criteria, it is difficult to understand how this would work. Would long-established research universities share such a brand with small private institutions who have met certain minimal standards? Such 'branding' will not add to the reputation to many of the well-established universities and colleges. Careful consideration should also be given to the structure and governance of any organization responsible for quality assurance given the differences in governance, risks and size of institutions, both public and private.

To summarize, we believe it makes sense to focus increased quality regulation and assurance on those institutions that pose the greatest risk to students and to the reputation of education in the Province. The quality assurance framework should evaluate whether institutions have robust internal mechanisms in place and then concentrate on those institutions without such processes in place and/or help them to develop them.

We encourage ongoing discussion with the sector and its institutions as the process moves from principles to implementation. Their insight and experience will be very valuable to the government as this process is further developed. RUCBC and its member institutions will be pleased to identify key leaders and experts in this area.

As we mentioned in our April letter, we have a real interest in working together with the government in enhancing and securing the Province's reputation for quality education.

Yours truly,

R. Ciceri

Robin Ciceri
President

copy:

Cheryl Wenezenki-Yolland, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Advanced Education
Stephen Toope, President, University of British Columbia
Andrew Petter, President, Simon Fraser University
David Turpin, President, University of Victoria
George Iwama, President, University of Northern British Columbia
Allan Cahoon, President, Royal Roads University
Alan Shaver, President, Thompson Rivers University
David Farrar, Provost & Vice-President Academic, University of British Columbia
Jonathan Driver, Vice-President Academic & Provost, Simon Fraser University
Reeta Tremblay, Vice-President Academic & Provost, University of Victoria
Mark Dale, Vice-President Academic & Provost, University of Northern British Columbia
Deborah Buszard, Deputy Vice Chancellor & Principal, University of British Columbia, Okanagan
Steve Grundy, Vice-President Academic & Provost, Royal Roads University
Ulrich Scheck, Provost & Vice-President Academic, Thompson Rivers University

APR 0 9 2013

Our Ref. 94702

Ms. Robin Ciceri, President
The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia
400 – 880 Douglas St
Victoria BC V8W 2B7

Dear Ms. Ciceri:

Thank you for your letter of March 19, 2013 regarding the Quality Assurance Framework Green
Paper and for providing some initial feedback on the policy directions contained in the paper.

I appreciate the issues you raised and I assure you that the Ministry of Advanced Education,
Innovation and Technology ("Ministry") is committed to developing an effective quality
assurance framework for British Columbia's vast, differentiated, and diverse system.

The Green Paper is intended to stimulate discussion on possible policy directions and the
proposals outlined are open for public consultation. I am grateful for the advice and suggestions
provided by The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) as well as
RUCBC member institutions during the Green Paper Discussion Table held March 20 and 21.
I welcome further comments on supporting continuous quality improvement in the
British Columbia post-secondary education system and assure you that all feedback received by
the Ministry will be used to inform development of the Quality Assurance Framework.
Furthermore, the consultative process will not end in April. I have also committed to continuing
consultations throughout the spring and summer of 2013.

I appreciate RUCBC's interest in working with the Ministry and look forward to future
discussions on the Quality Assurance Framework. In particular, I hope RUCBC and its member
institutions will continue to actively participate in the next round of consultations.

Sincerely,

Ian Rongve, Ph.D.
Assistant Deputy Minister

Ministry of Advanced Education,   Sector Strategy and   Mailing Address: Location Address:
Innovation and Technology   Quality Assurance   PO Box 9157 Stn Prov Govt   3rd Floor – 835 Humboldt Street
                                     Division   Victoria BC V8W 9H2   Victoria BC V8V 4W8

                                                                                          Telephone: (250) 356-0826
                                                                                          Facsimile: (250) 356-5468

AED-2013-00135
Page 76

Research Universities of British Columbia: Committed Quality Assurance

Providing academic programs of the highest quality is a common goal among the research universities. As such, quality assurance is an integral and important focus of university review processes. The research universities already engage in a broad range of institutional and programmatic review practices. These review practices are designed to assure:

- That institutions are developing and offering degrees of quality that will be recognized nationally and internationally;
- Consistent, equitable, transparent and effective processes to ensure program quality and outcomes for students.

The research universities are committed to providing students with the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills and experience essential to becoming productive and engaged citizens within a global context. In pursuit of this goal, they support the development of skills and capacities that have been identified as critical to their future success, in the context of a research intensive environment that support students and faculty in the development and dissemination of new knowledge and creative activity. Intellectual, academic and practical skills include:

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Effective written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Problem solving
- Collaboration skills and the ability to work in teams

Personal and social responsibility capacities include:

- Civic engagement and understanding – local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action

Achievement of these goals is obtained through:

- Academic and co-curricular programs of the highest quality
- Integration of research and teaching across the curriculum
- Practise and support of relevant skills in the context of progressively more challenging problems, assignments, projects, and standards for performance
- Opportunities for experiential and work-integrated learning
- Active engagement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

Following are a set of activities that the research universities regularly engage in to achieve these goals.

1) **Academic Program Reviews**

   All of the research intensive universities engage in regular, systematic, internal and external reviews of all academic programs every 5-7 years. Academic Program Review processes differ to minor degrees across institutions, but generally share the following common features:

   - An extensive self-study by the unit, coupled with institutional data,
   - Documentation of levels and trends of student enrolment/demand,
   - Completion times and graduation rates for degrees,
   - Indications of student satisfaction with the program and of the quality of instruction (National Survey of Student Engagement – NSSE; Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey - CGPSS; results of course experience surveys or other forms of course evaluations, etc.),
   - Results of provincial 2 and 5 year post-graduation surveys of employment levels and skills obtained in degree programs,
   - Indications of labour market demand and employer satisfaction when available
   - A site visit by external experts in the particular field of study from other universities in the province, in other parts of Canada, or other countries,
   - Reports prepared by external reviewers address:
     - The currency and relevancy of program content and focus,
     - The articulation of learning objective and outcomes,
     - Opportunities for experiential learning
     - Demonstration of program features designed to develop skills in effective written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, critical and creative thinking, inquiry and analysis, problem solving and the ability to work in teams,

   Follow-up on academic program reviews include an analysis and response to the reports of external reviewers and typically result in a series of action steps designed to improve program quality and support continued investment in the program, or to reduce or eliminate programs that do not have sufficient quality or student demand.

2) **Accreditation of Professional Programs**

   Many professional programs undergo independent review for accreditation by professional bodies. These include engineering, business, medicine and other health related programs (e.g., nursing, clinical, counselling and school psychology, social work, etc.). Accreditation reviews include extensive reviews of learning outcomes, student outcomes in terms of registration/licensure in the profession and levels of employment.

3) **Review of New Academic Programs**

   All new academic programs undergo rigorous internal and external review and are approved through the Degree Quality Assessment Board in an open and transparent process. It should also be noted that in addition to new programs, any existing program that undergoes a major revision is captured by this review system.

- 2 -

4) Provincial Post-Graduate Surveys

The provincial 2 and 5-year post-graduation surveys gather outcomes data on all university graduates and are extremely valuable to the universities and to informing government. They provide consistent and regular data with respect to:

- student employment levels, career categories, and salaries obtained,
- further education sought including graduate degrees and professional certifications,
- skills developed and the relevance of those skills to the workplace

This information is regularly reviewed by institutions and program directors and is incorporated into academic program reviews and program planning exercises.

5) Ongoing Assessment of Student Based Quality Metrics

All universities engage in regular ongoing activities and analyses designed to address program quality:

- Course experience surveys or other forms of course evaluation are commonly obtained for every undergraduate course:
    - Instructor preparedness, availability, and effectiveness
    - Clarity of course structure and design, student engagement, relevancy of skills developed
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), typically undertaken for students at the 1st and 4th year level, include key indicators of program quality such as:
    - Level of academic challenge
    - Level of active and collaborative learning
    - Level of student-faculty interaction
    - Level of enriching educational experiences
    - Supportive campus environment

6) Commitment to Transfer of Academic Credit Across Institutions

The research universities fully support and work to ensure seamless transfers and transitions across the post-secondary sector.

- The BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) which oversees and manages the articulation process has representatives from the university sector at all levels
- Universities are now designated as both sending and receiving institutions and work diligently to maintain articulation agreements across the sector

7) Engagement in Provincially Supported Career Planning

The universities are fully represented in the Program Planner for students. This service, supported through BCCAT, provides students, parents and employers with detailed information about post-secondary programs, courses required, costs, availability, career development, salary levels that can be anticipated, etc.

- 3 -

8) Ongoing Assessment of Academic Quality Metrics

The research universities also regularly review many factors related to program quality:

- Annual review of the teaching performance of faculty and sessional instructors
- Class/course size
- Flexibility of access (e.g., face-to-face, blended or online access)
- Integration of educational technologies to improve learning outcomes
- Effectiveness of academic advising
- Effectiveness of career advising and development
- Access to learning supports (writing and math support, library support, study space)
- Curricular reviews to ensure clear, coherent pathways, including foundational and capstone courses, that support program completion and the achievement of learning outcomes
- Support of research programs that evaluate the effectiveness of teaching innovations (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning – SoTL)
- Regular reviews of grading practices and grading integrity

9) Commitment to Accessibility

The research universities also engage in regular reviews of accessibility and affordability, reviewing the levels of tuition, participation rates across income levels, debt levels and times to debt elimination, etc.

The research universities also have robust programs of scholarships, bursaries, merit and financially based, to support student enrolment and success.

10) Full Engagement in Student Mobility and Transfer

The research universities are full participants in the ongoing Student Transitions Project (STP) which monitors, assesses, and reports on the transitions of BC high school students into the public post-secondary system, their success rates (credential completion) and the ease with which they can move about the system.

11) Annual Review of Service Plans and Achievement of Ministry Targets

The research universities provide an annual Accountability Plan and Report to the Minister, including their achievement with respect to goals articulated by the Ministry over the last year (enrolment, graduation rates, etc.).

In sum, the research universities concur with the Ministry's commitment to assurance quality within the post-secondary system. The research universities have demonstrated continued evidence of quality through their provincial, national and international reputations, and have incorporated and embraced practices to document and make available evidence of the quality of their programs.

THE Research
Universities' Council
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

March 19, 2013

Mr. Ian Rongve
Assistant Deputy Minister
Sector Strategy & Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology
P O Box 9191 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E6

Dear Mr. Rongve,

The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) is writing in response to your letter of March 4, 2013 and the distribution of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology's *Green Paper on a BC Quality Assurance Framework.* We appreciate the work undertaken by the Ministry on the Green Paper.

As you know, the research universities share the Ministry's commitment to high quality within the post-secondary education system in British Columbia. The research universities support a framework that provides information to students and to the public on the processes within institutions and how these demonstrate quality assurance on a continuous basis.

There are many principles and components underpinning the framework described by the Green Paper which we support; however, there is a concern that the framework tries to encompass too many elements which are not directly relevant to quality assurance and that the model, in its current state, will not best serve the objectives and outcomes intended.

The framework also includes some elements that require additional discussion, including the question of one framework for the entire system, the use of the five-level "maturity" model, and the approach to streamlining existing processes for quality assurance.

... /2.

UBC   SFU   University
of Victoria   UNBC   Royal Roads
UNIVERSITY   THOMPSON RIVERS
UNIVERSITY

Given the significance of the topic and its complexity, we believe the consultation period on the Green Paper needs to be extended. It is important that the timeframe allow for dialogue within the system as well as between senior officials in the Ministry with institutional leaders. Therefore, the research universities will not be in a position to provide a response by April 12, 2013 and ask that you extend the consultation period.

We would like to reiterate our interest in working together with the Ministry to develop a framework for quality assurance within the provincial post-secondary education system and look forward to future discussions on this matter.

Yours truly,

Robin Ciceri
President

copy: Cheryl Wenezenki-Yolland, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Advanced Education
        Stephen Toope, President, University of British Columbia
        Andrew Petter, President, Simon Fraser University
        David Turpin, President, University of Victoria
        George Iwama, President, University of Northern British Columbia
        Allan Cahoon, President, Royal Roads University
        Alan Shaver, President, Thompson Rivers University
        Vice Presidents Academic, The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia

From:	Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Sent:	Friday, August 30, 2013 4:38 PM
To:	Rogers, Dorothy AVED:EX
Subject:	FW: Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 20)
Attachments:	Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 20) (2).docx

Here's the consultation roll-up that Ian approved.

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia

Cell: s.17 | Fax: (250) 387-3750

From: Carnegie, Lynn AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 20, 2013 4:08 PM
To: Patterson, Catherine M AVED:EX
Cc: Wyllie, Sandra AVED:EX; Luu, Dao AVED:EX; Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: FW: Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 20)

Please see attached for Ian.

Thanks,
Lynn

From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 20, 2013 3:11 PM
To: Carnegie, Lynn AVED:EX
Cc: Patterson, Catherine M AVED:EX
Subject: FW: Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 14)

Hello,
Could you please edit and send to Catherine for Ian.

From: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 20, 2013 1:22 PM
To: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Subject: RE: Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 14)

Hi Val,

Here's the revised document.

I'm happy to make further edits if needed.

Dao

DAO T. LUU
Governance and Quality Assurance

Ministry of Advanced Education
Province of British Columbia

Cell: s.17 | Fax: (250) 387-3750

From: Bakowski, Valarie AVED:EX
Sent: Tuesday, August 20, 2013 11:59 AM
To: Luu, Dao AVED:EX
Subject: Quality Assurance Framework (Aug 14)

Hello Dao,
Could you please revise the sentence in red under the Challenges Section and then do one quick sweep of the paper?
Thank you,
Val

Quality Assurance Framework
August 2013

INTRODUCTION

British Columbia (B.C.) has a world renowned post-secondary education system. To maintain it, B.C. is committed to continuous quality improvement to ensure that stakeholders, including post-secondary institutions, students and employers, benefit from the outcomes of a quality assurance framework and that our quality assurance practices are consistent with recognized best practices. The primary objectives of B.C.'s quality assurance framework are to:

- protect students' investment in their own education;
- uphold rigorous provincial quality assurance standards that support institutional excellence; and
- promote confidence in educational quality across the entire post-secondary education system.

In March 2013, the government released a quality assurance framework green paper for public review and comment. The proposed model was focused on continuous quality improvement principles and envisioned a cohesive, province-wide approach to quality assurance that recognizes institutional and sector diversity, provides greater student protection, streamlines multiple designation processes, and introduces proportionate external quality assurance oversight (see Appendix 1 in the green paper). The document was informed by consultations that began in the spring of 2012, previous government reports, and research relevant to quality assurance.

The vision presented was for a system that would be:

1. *more streamlined* for students and stakeholders to understand and for institutions and government to administer;
2. *more strategic* to enable a differentiated form and level of external quality assurance oversight reflecting demonstrated institutional internal strength in quality assessment practices; and
3. *more flexible* to foster and recognize innovation in the system.

During the spring of 2013, a substantial amount of positive and constructive feedback was received via multiple platforms, with system-wide discussions being the primary avenue.

Amongst the feedback received, two important elements stand out as having greatly influenced government's approach:

- **Timeline**. Concerns were raised that government was moving too quickly to implement broad scale improvements. Institutions felt strongly that more time and information was needed to ensure obligations of a new quality assurance framework could be met.

- **Scale and scope of change.** Participants questioned whether the proposed improvements were proportionate to the issues government was trying to address. It was suggested that government focus improvements in its areas of concern rather than full-scale change for the entire post-secondary education system.

In response to these elements, during the summer of 2013, government undertook a more collaborative and inclusive consultation process with the intention of collectively reflecting with the system on how to move forward with improvements to the quality assurance framework. Government is thus committed to listening to the system with an open mind on any suggested improvements and approaches identified as areas of priority.

Discussions held focused on the best quality assurance outcomes for the province, immediate issues that need to be addressed, and what considerations are important moving forward. The following questions were used to facilitate the meetings:

1. What is quality assurance in post-secondary education and is there anything that needs to be fixed in the current quality assurance and designation processes?
2. Are there challenges on the horizon that concern you?
3. Are there ways that we can collectively address the issues just identified?
    a. What can government do to help?
    b. What can government not do to help?
2. What is the minimal approach to change?
3. What is the most comprehensive approach to change?

Discussions were held with:

- Public institutions
- Private degree-granting institutions
- Private career-training institutions
- Private language schools

SYSTEM FEEDBACK

The summary of feedback begins with a common understanding of quality assurance, followed by the challenges identified in the sessions, and ends with suggestions for improvement.

Common Understanding of Quality Assurance

In respect to defining a common understanding of quality assurance, consultation participants often made reference to outcomes and processes. These themes are consistent with what was identified in earlier consultations with the system.

- **Effective outcomes for students.** Participants indicated that it was critical that quality requires a description of learning outcomes and institutional transparency in stating and reporting outcomes. Students should be able to match their expectations with the outcomes of an educational program and be prepared to achieve the outcomes. Another component of a quality assurance process should provide validation of educational quality and ensures the integrity of credentials. Students, employers, licensing bodies and other stakeholders have an interest in a system of quality assurance that upholds rigorous standards. This would assure domestic and international markets that the program meets educational standards and that the credential earned is meaningful.

- **Ensure student protection is provided regardless of the type of institution, the type of program or where the program is delivered.** Stakeholders agreed that ensuring institutional and program quality required that all students should receive the education promised in their institution's public documents, such as recruitment posters, websites and calendars. There was broad agreement that students should have access to free, easy-to-understand, comparable data for all post-secondary educational institutions to inform their decisions.

- **Effective quality assurance should be assessed within the context of institutional mission and educational purpose, be based on peer-review, and encourage continuous quality improvement.** Participants encouraged the Ministry to take a multi-dimensional understanding of *quality* as institutions and government must negotiate and balance multiple stakeholder perspectives on quality. Quality assurance should be outcomes-focused, data-driven, and transparent. Support for innovation and entrepreneurship to allow institutions to be creative in their pedagogic approaches, and responsive to student and community needs, was seen as a key component of a quality assurance process. Finally, it was stressed that quality assurance needs to be a collaborative effort between institutions and government. Institutions should have a fair level of autonomy and have primary responsibility for quality assessment of programs. Government has the responsibility to respond to public desire for accountability and transparency.

Challenges

Diverse student needs and expectations, the goal to maintain international competitiveness, and additional reporting requirements, were identified as the common challenges facing the system. The public sector also identified challenges around funding.

- **Diverse Student Needs.** The biggest challenge identified by participants was the increasing diversity of student needs and expectations.
  - First Nations are the fastest growing student population. To support post-secondary education achievement for this population, it was expressed that institutions need to ensure that there are appropriate support structures in place to help students succeed. In addition, Aboriginal-controlled institutes need a mechanism to help facilitate recognition and credit transfer. It was suggested that the Province should establish long-term funding for programs that support Aboriginal students and consider how the quality assurance framework interfaces with the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework.
  - An increase in the international student population was also viewed as a challenge because they require different types of support to succeed.
  - In general, institutions must also be responsive to changing student expectations of when, where, and how education is delivered.

- **International Competitiveness.** Institutions stressed the need for a quality assurance system to maintain relevancy and consistent quality assurance processes that are recognized as best practices internationally. Institutions invest a lot of resources to meet the Province's quality assurance obligations and there should be some consideration given to whether the quality assurance system serves the needs of institutions. For example, is there a need that is not being met that is driving some institutions to seek American regional accreditation? Participants encouraged government to look at other quality assurance systems, adopt the best practices, and become a leader in quality assurance. To increase B.C.'s competitiveness, some participants advocated adopting the term *accreditation* and rebranding the Education Quality Assurance designation. Accreditation should indicate quality assurance validation and authority for the

3 | P a g e

institution to operate, and it would also provide recognition for lesser-known institutions in international markets where the term is widely understood.

- **Additional Reporting Requirements.** Participants raised the concern about additional reporting requirements should a new quality assurance framework be implemented. Current reporting obligations are viewed as onerous and burdensome. For the Private Career Training Institutions Agency (PCTIA) institutions, it was noted that there should be rigour in quality standards but it should not be unnecessarily burdensome. For public institutions, the reporting requirements are viewed as repetitive and redundant. It was suggested that PCTIA and the ministry consolidate or streamline reporting requirements by considering what is truly necessary for quality assessment and considering how the data collected can be used for multiple purposes. Institutions clearly stated there needs to be clear rationale for any new or additional reporting requirements and that they should add value to the quality of education. Public institutions also expressed a desire for the Ministry to make data public to allow for comparisons between institutions, within and across sectors.

- **Funding.** Public institutions stated that funding policies and limits are barriers to improving transfer, supporting students, and building institutional capacity including resources to collect data and conduct institutional research. Public institutions indicated that they face unnecessary constraints that make it difficult to increase their revenues independent of government funding.

Improvements

Overall, participants encouraged government to maintain the momentum it has established and to continue making quality assurance a priority. In the approach to change, participants discussed the minimal approach and the full-scale approach. There was general agreement in the approaches to change, with the exception of the use of accreditation. Participants viewed use of accreditation to signal government validation of a program as both the minimal approach and the full-scale approach.

Some participants also raised the issue of a national approach to quality assurance. Government reiterated its willingness to continue working with the provinces and territories through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.

In identifying the approach to change, there was not one specific improvement for each challenge; rather, it was a collection of improvements that would help facilitate institutional response and action. As part of the minimal approach to change, participants suggested that government begin to address the following points:

- **Improve program review processes.** Revise reporting and program reviews to be more outcomes focused, add a follow-up mechanism rather than focussing only on program approval, speed up the timeline for degree approval, and orient review panels in widely-accepted peer review practices. Review processes should support institutions to be more innovative, entrepreneurial, and responsive to student and community needs.

- **Support educational quality improvement.** Adopt an iterative approach and support institutions towards quality improvement. Government can provide resources and a platform for institutions to exchange ideas on internal quality control and management and to learn from each other.

- **Adopt proportionate quality assurance oversight where good institutions undergo an institutional review rather than program reviews.** Institutions are committed to educational

quality. For institutions that have demonstrated strong internal quality control and management, quality assurance oversight should focus on audits of the institution's quality assessment policies and practices.

- **Greater transparency.** Standards and processes need to be clearly stated with explicit expectations, outcomes, and timelines. Private career-training institutions expressed a desire for greater accountability in the management of the Student Training Completion Fund, more transparency on why PCTIA is requesting information, and greater consideration of current and new regulatory obligations.

- **Increase cooperation between organizations and align quality assurance processes when possible.** There needs to be clear roles and responsibilities for various bodies (e.g., government, crowns, and regulatory bodies) engaged in quality assurance to avoid duplication and inconsistent standards.

In general, full-scale change was viewed as a single quality assurance framework that recognizes the uniqueness of each sector with a single quality assurance body responsible for quality assurance across the province. The frequency and intensity of quality reviews would be proportionate to the strength of the institution's internal program quality control and management.

NEXT STEPS

Quality assurance and student protection remain a priority for government. Government is committed to working with the system to strengthen the quality assurance for the post-secondary education system. Areas clearly identified for improvement during the consultations will inform the next steps of the process. In consultation with the system, government will determine how to proceed, including appropriate timelines for implementation. Also, in keeping with government's commitment to a more collaborative and inclusive approach, government will continue working with the sectors to identify ongoing problems and solutions to enhance the quality of their respective sectors. Part of this process will be determining roles and responsibilities of the institutions, sectors, and government, in ensuring students receive the education promised by the institution.

Government also has commitments relating to quality assurance that were made through the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and the International Education Strategy. In addition, the Province has obligations for the International Student Program once the federal government regulations come into effect in spring 2014. Government will work to fulfil these commitments and obligations through regulatory and/or policy changes.