New Program Proposals: what you need to know ...

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New Program Proposals

Introducing a new program requires navigating two separate program approval processes:

- Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council) – looks closely at curriculum, learning outcomes and content

- Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) – focuses on labour market and student demand, alignment with Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA), duplication of existing programs elsewhere and the proposed tuition fees
Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council or QC)

- Was established by OCAV in 2010

- Operates at arm’s length from the provincial government and the public universities

- Quality Council (QC) reviews and must give approval to each new undergraduate and graduate program at Ontario universities

- University of Waterloo was audited by QC in March 2018

New Program Proposals

- New programs are prepared according to Waterloo’s Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) that was approved by the Quality Council.

- IQAP compliance is the responsibility of the AVPA and AVPGSPA.

- The Quality Assurance Office (QA) oversees the new program process, is the main contact for all new program proposals, and acts on behalf of the AVPA and AVPGSPA.
What is a “new” program

“a ‘new program’ is brand-new ... [it] has substantially different program requirements and substantially different learning outcomes from those of any existing approved programs offered by the institution”

Source: University of Waterloo IQAP
Where to start?!

- Discuss the idea within your department
- Get input from your Associate Dean, Undergraduate or Graduate Studies
- Contact the Quality Assurance Office
- Create a **Statement of Interest** (1-2 page brief), using the template provided on the QA website
Statement of Interest must follow the template and include:

- Program emphasis and impetus for proposing the program
- Differentiable learning outcomes
- Benefit to students
- Whether the program will be co-op, regular or both
- A suggested start date and projected enrolment (Canadian vs. International)
- Proposed tuition rate (existing or alternative)
- Resource requirements (space, faculty, staff, online courses, etc.)
Share Statement of Interest with the Quality Assurance Office

- QA Office will then consult the Associate Vice-President Academic (AVPA) or Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (AVPGSPA) and related academic support units, and respond to the program with questions and/or suggested revisions.

Academic Support Units include:

- Centre for Extended Learning
- Co-operative and Experiential Education
- Centre for Teaching Excellence
- Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs
- Institutional Analysis and Planning
- Library
- Registrar’s Office
- Space Planning
- Waterloo Professional Development Program
Stages of new program approvals

• Preparation (4 - 6 months)
• Internal approvals (4 - 6 months)
• External approvals (4 - 6 months)
• Implementation (4 - 6 months)
Approval Process for New Programs

1. Idea for new program
   - Discuss with Dean/School & Dean’s Office
   - Statement of Interest
     - Initial review and input from QA, AUPA, AVPSSP and academic support units
   - 1st Draft Proposal Brief, Volume I & Draft Delivery Description

2. QA distributes draft to AUPA/AVPSSP and academic support units. Revision incorporated, as necessary
3. Provost Approval
4. QA Office liaises with departments proposing new program to finalize Volumes I, II, III
5. Significant revisions based on site visit
   - Faculty Council Approval
   - External Reviewers Site Visit
   - Provost Approval

6. Final Proposal Brief, Volumes I, II, III and Final Calendar Description
   - QA Office submits to SUC or SGRC
   - SUC or SGRC Approval
   - Senate Approval

7. Submit to Quality Council & MAESO
   - MAESO has only 4 submission dates/year, approval takes minimum 4 months

8. Permitted to advertise new program to prospective students
   - *Subject to approval by the Quality Council

9. Two-Year Progress Report (after first student intake)

10. Program Launches (first student intake)

11. MAESO Approval (Academic)

12. Enters Cyclical Review Cycle

*Note that it may take 1.5 years (graduate programs) to 2.5 years (undergraduate programs) to complete the new program process.

Acronym Definitions:
- AUPA = Associate Vice-President, Academic
- AVPSSP = Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs
- MAESO = Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development
- QA = Quality Assurance Office
- SGRC = Senate Graduate and Research Council
- SUD = Senate Undergraduate Council

Academic support units, as required:
- Centre for Extended Learning
- Centre for Teaching Excellence
- Co-operative Education
- Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs
- Institutional Analysis & Planning
- Library
- Registrar’s Office
- Space Planning
- Waterloo Professional Development Program

Y = Yes. **NOTE: If a key decision point is not Yes, the program may be required to move back one or more steps until all issues are adequately addressed.
Preparation of Proposal

- Feedback from academic support units (e.g., Co-operative and Experiential Education, Library, Space, etc.) should be used to develop your formal proposal document (Volume I)

- The proposal brief (Volume I) cannot proceed for approval at Faculty Council until all necessary documents have been reviewed by the QA Office, the academic support units, and approved by the Provost

- Complete 3 Volumes: I) Proposal Brief, II) Faculty CVs and III) Suggested Reviewers

- Templates are available on the Academic Program Reviews website
Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE) Support – Curriculum Design

Design
- Outcomes
- Learning experiences
- Curriculum mapping

Implementation
- Course Design
- Integrating Key Learning Experiences

Formative Assessment
- On-going curriculum enhancement

Summative Review
- Cyclical reviews
- Accreditation

Contact: Veronica Brown  veronica.brown@uwaterloo.ca  x31096
Centre for Extended Learning (CEL)

- Supports design, development, and delivery of online courses and programs
- Input on proposals (online pedagogy & design)
- Should contact CEL at onset of planning or 2 years before intended 1st intake
- Average course takes 10 months to develop

Contact: Dina Meunier  d2meunie@uwaterloo.ca  x34929
Library Report

Evaluates overall level of potential support

- Information resources
- Research skills development
- Research support

Get to know your Librarians

Contact: Nick Richbell  nick.richbell@uwaterloo.ca  x32445
Registrar’s Office – Records & Systems

- Maintain academic structure (programs, plans, courses) in Quest
- Maintain and publish the Undergraduate academic calendar
- Administer the official student academic record
- Maintain the university-level undergraduate application and admission processes

Deadlines/timelines:
- Driven by the calendar year in which the program is to be effective
- Must be approved by the Faculty, Senate Undergraduate Council and Senate by November of the preceding year

Contact: Mary Lynn Benninger  mary.lynn.benninger@uwaterloo.ca  x46788
Marketing & Undergraduate Recruitment (MUR)

- Work collaboratively with the faculties to market programs
- Key considerations
  - Data pointing to successful enrollment
  - How is the program different from competitor programs?
  - Program name (consider it carefully)
  - Test with influencers, potential students/parents, employers to gauge interest
- Timing for Sept 2021 launch
  - October 2019: new budget request for digital advertising
  - December 2019: for inclusions in viewbook and faculty brochures

Contact: Tina Roberts  roberts@uwaterloo.ca  x36050
Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs

• Maintain academic structure (programs, plans, courses and milestones) in Quest
• Maintain and publish the Graduate Studies Academic Calendar (GSAC) three times a year (September, January, May)
• Maintain the university-level graduate application and admission processes
• Administer the official graduate student academic record
• Administer graduate scholarships and awards

Deadlines/timelines:
• Driven by the calendar term and year in which the program is to be effective
• Must be approved by the Department, Faculty, Senate Graduate & Research Council (SGRC) and Senate before the start of the proposed effective date

Contact: Trevor Clews  tclews@uwaterloo.ca  x47170
Graduate Marketing & Recruitment

- Marketing for all graduate programs and graduate student life
- Liaise with faculty recruitment representative to collaborate on program promotion and awareness
- Inclusion of new program on Discover Graduate Studies (recruitment website)
  - Student profiles
  - Program application details
  - Contact information for future student inquiries

Contact: Trevor Clews  tclews@uwaterloo.ca  x47170
Internal Approvals

- Faculty Council
- Site visit by external reviewers (unless expedited*)
- External Reviewers’ Report
- Revisions and re-approval, if necessary
- Review at Senate Undergraduate Council (SUC) or Senate Graduate and Research Council (SGRC)
- Senate

*Graduate collaborative programs and graduate diplomas follow an expedited approval process and do not require a site visit*
External Approvals

Approval Process for New Programs

**Anonymized Definitions:**
- AVPA = Associate Vice-President, Academic
- AVPGSPA = Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs
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*Note that it may take 1.5 years (graduate programs) to 2.5 years (undergraduate programs) to complete the new program process.
External Approvals

• The proposal is then sent for approval by Quality Council (Academic approval) and MAESD* (tuition/grant approval)

  *MAESD only has 4 submission dates/year

• New programs may be advertised once the program has been submitted to QC, clearly stating

  “Subject to final approval by the Quality Council”
Implementation

Approval Process for New Programs

- Idea for new program
  - Discuss with Dean/School & Dean’s Office
  - Statement of Interest
    - Initial review and input from QA, AUPA, AVPS/PA and academic support units
    - Department/School Approval
    - 1st Draft Proposal Brief, Volume I & Draft Calendar Description
      - QA distributes draft to AUPA/AVPS/PA and academic support units. Revisions incorporated, as necessary
  - Provost Approval
  - Quality Council Approval (Academic)
    - MAESD Approval: (Tuition/Grant)
      - Senate Approval

*Note that it may take 1.5 years (graduate programs) to 2.5 years (undergraduate programs) to complete the new program process.

Acronym Definitions:
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Y = Yes. **NOTE: If a key decision point is not Yes, the program may be required to move back one or more steps until all issues are adequately addressed.**

MAESD has only 4 submission dates/year, approval takes minimum 4 months.

Enter Cyclic Review Cycle
- Two-Year Progress Report (after first student intake)
- Program Launches (first student intake)
Where IAP fits in

Enrolment planning, financial viability analysis, tuition rates, Ministry environment/compliance, support for Faculties and Departments

IAP prepares and submits program for Ministry approval; coordinates submission of tuition rates and fees to BOG; responds to any Ministry questions, follow-up discussions, if applicable
Ministry Guidelines for New Programs

Grant Eligibility
- Operating grant support from Ministry ensures students in the program are OSAP-eligible (Not eligible for grant = No OSAP support for students)
- Requested BIU/WGU weight (FORPOS, CIP code)
- Enrolment planning, graduate allocations

Tuition & Fees
- Tuition & fees compared and contrasted with similar programs in the province
- Tuition breakdown (# terms, term fee vs. course fee, FT vs. PT, etc.)

- Compliance with Ministry regulations
- Costs: ability to operate program without additional Ministry infrastructure/capital investment
- Evidence of societal/labour market need
- Evidence of student demand
- Justifiable duplication
- Alignment with SMA areas of growth and/or strength

* U N I V E R S I T Y  O F  W A T E R L O O
Other institutions can submit concerns about competition, differentiation, labour market demand, student demand, availability of work placements.

**Ministry Guidelines for New Programs**

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Best Practices

- Consult expertise on campus to assist you (e.g., IAP, GSPA)
- Keep the QA Office up-to-date
- Set realistic timelines and work backwards from desired program start date (and build-in some buffer space!)
- Regularly meet with your colleagues/team about progress
Question & Answer Period
Contacts:

Quality Assurance Office
Amanda McKenzie
Alyssa Voigt

Institutional Analysis & Planning
Carrie MacKinnon
Jennifer Kieffer

https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-reviews/