

Developing a New Program

Presented by:

Academic Quality Enhancement (AQuE) Office



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO



PURPOSE OF THIS WORKSHOP:

To provide you with an overview of how a new program is developed and the key documents involved.

At the end of this session, you will:

- Understand the new program approval process, including recent changes;
- Distinguish between standard and expedited approval pathways;
- Identify the key documents required and their main components;
- Gain insight on how to prepare for the approval of a new program successfully;
- Identify key contacts that can assist you in the process;
- Understand the timeline for developing and approving a new program.

WHAT IS A NEW PROGRAM?

A new program is any program that has substantially different program requirements and substantially different learning outcomes from those of any existing approved programs offered by the University of Waterloo.

- Types of new programs include:
 - Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, BSc)
 - Major in an existing Bachelor's degree (e.g., Bachelor of Science in Zoology)
 - Master's or Doctoral degree (e.g., MA, MSc, PhD)
 - Graduate Diploma (GDip)
 - Concurrent (Type 2) – completed concurrently with graduate degree, requires additional academic units, usually interdisciplinary
 - Direct-entry (Type 3) – a stand-alone, direct-entry program

WHAT IS NOT A NEW PROGRAM

The following are major modifications and not new programs:

- Graduate collaborative programs
- Undergraduate diplomas
- Minors
- Options
- Specializations

Non-academic credentials are approved by the Alternative Credentials Approval Committee (ACAC).

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- Statement of Interest (SOI)
- Proposal:
 - Volume I
 - Volume II* – Faculty CVs
 - Volume III* – List of proposed external reviewers

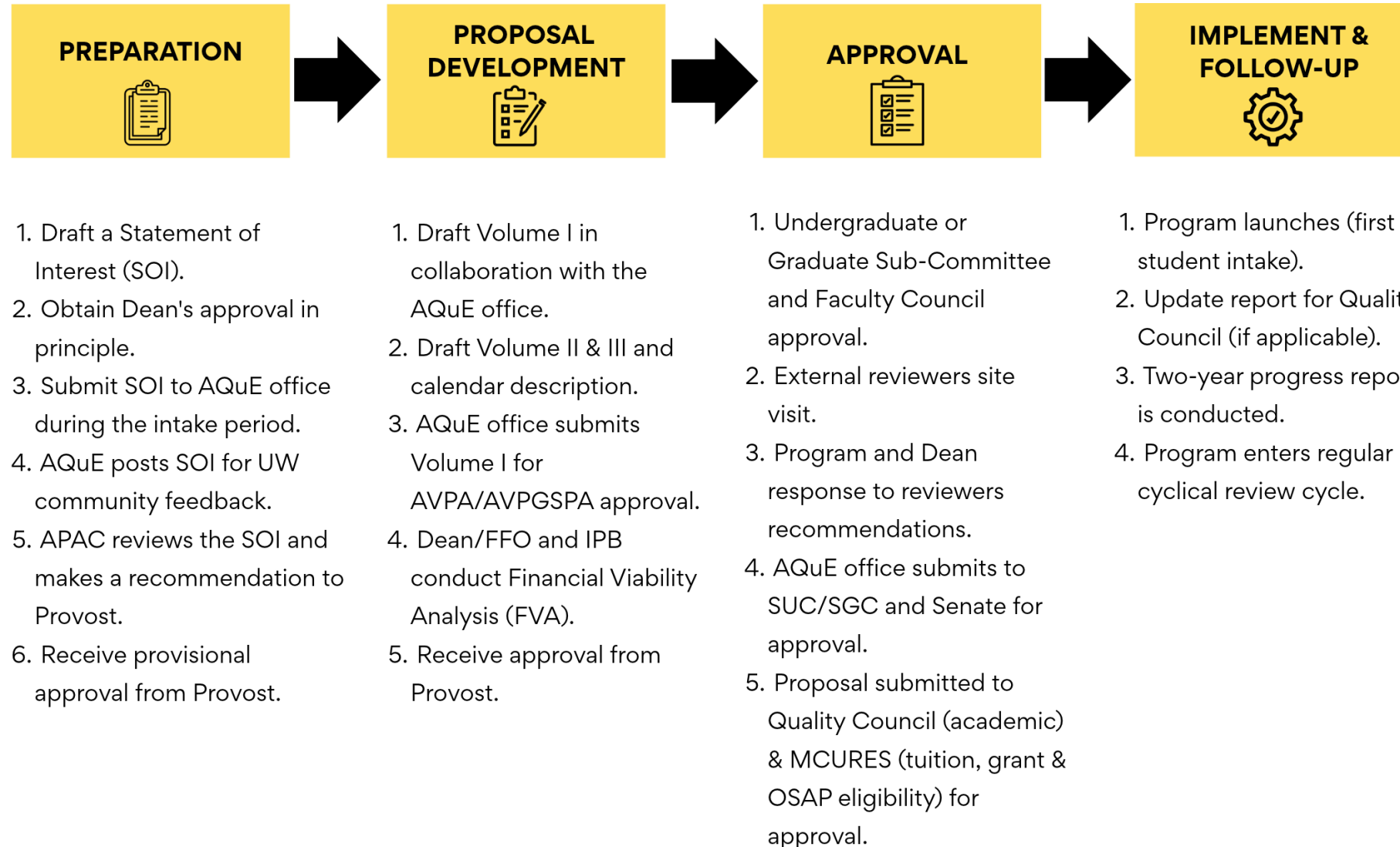
**Not required for expedited approvals. Faculty qualifications to be included in Volume I.*

APPROVAL PROCESS

- Graduate Diplomas follow the expedited approval process.
 - Do not require Volumes II and III or a site visit.
- All other programs follow the standard approval process.
- Both expedited and standard approval involve the following four phases:



STANDARD APPROVAL PROCESS:



Phase 1: PREPARATION

- Draft a Statement of Interest (SOI).
- Obtain Dean's approval in principle.
- Submit SOI to AQuE Office during the intake period.
 - Twice per year.
 - Two submission stages – draft version & final version.
 - New Program Team provides feedback between the two stages.
- AQuE Office posts SOI for UW community feedback (on AVPA website).
- Academic Program Advisory Committee (APAC) reviews the SOI and makes a recommendation to the Provost about what programs to move on to full proposal.
 - Program proponents may be asked to present the new program idea to the committee.
- Receive provisional approval from the Provost.

STATEMENT OF INTEREST SUBMISSION

- Draft SOI deadline – **November 13th**
- New Programs Team will review and provide feedback by December 2nd
- **Final SOI deadline – December 16th**
- SOI publicly posted – December 18th-January 22nd
- APAC meets to review all SOIs – late February
 - Program proponents may be asked to present
- Committee recommends programs to Provost that should move forward to full proposal phase

STATEMENT OF INTEREST:

New Program Summary Checklist

What is the proposed credential?	
☐ Bachelor's ☐ Research Master's ☐ Coursework Master's	☐ Type 2 Graduate Diploma (Concurrent Diploma) ☐ PhD ☐ Type 3 Graduate Diploma (Direct-entry Diploma) ☐ Other
What is the proposed format of the program? Check all that apply.	
Will the program involve experiential learning? ☐ No, regular program only ☐ Yes, through co-op ☐ Yes, not co-op but with other experiential learning (e.g., internship, practicum)	If graduate-level co-op, is it: ☐ Centrally administered ☐ Locally administered
Will students be allowed to enroll: ☐ Full-Time ☐ Part-Time ☐ Both	Will the program be administered: ☐ Fully on-campus ☐ Fully online ☐ Hybrid
What are the enrolment expectations?	
<i>Ensure ranges are realistic. You will need to provide evidence/information to support your enrolment expectations later in the document.</i>	
First Year Intake: #	Domestic: # or %
Steady-State Intake: #	International: # or %
What is the proposed effective date?	
☐ Fall ☐ Winter ☐ Spring Year: _____	

Other sections:

- Differentiable outcomes and attributes; comparable programs
- Structure of the program
- Enrolment expectations and timeline
- Resources requirements

What is the proposed tuition structure?	
Do you intend to offer this as a: ☐ Grant-eligible program ☐ Full-cost recovery program	
Undergraduate: ☐ Existing UW Arts & Science tuition ☐ Alternative existing UW tuition, please specify: \$ _____ ☐ New tuition rate: \$ _____	Graduate: ☐ Existing UW graduate research tuition ☐ Alternative existing UW tuition, please specify: \$ _____ ☐ New tuition rate: \$ _____

Phase 2: PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Draft Volume I in collaboration with the AQuE Office.
2. Draft Volume II & III (for standard approvals only).
 - Volume II provides a list of all the faculty CVs associated with the program.
 - Volume III provides a list of all the proposed external reviewers and reasons they are qualified for such review.
3. AQuE Office submits Volume I for AVPA/AVPGSPA approval.
4. The Dean/Faculty Financial Officer and IPB (Budget and Resource Planning) team complete a Financial Viability Analysis (FVA).
5. The Dean with assistance from IPB will present the FVA and Volume I to the Provost for approval.

**The New Program Proposal (Volume I, II, III) cannot proceed for Faculty-level approval, until approved by the academic support units, the AQuE Office, the AVPA or AVPGSPA, and the Provost.*

PROPOSAL – VOLUME I:

- **Introduction**
- **Evaluation Criteria**
 - Objectives of the Program (WHY)
 - Program Learning Outcomes (WHAT)
 - Program Requirements
 - Assessment of Teaching and Learning
 - Admission Requirements
 - Resources
 - Quality and Other Indicators
- **Projected Enrolment**
 - Must be realistic – difference between projected and actual enrolment will need to be justified in the program's progress report after a few student intakes

- **Financial Plan Addendum (for internal use)**
 - Human Resources
 - Teaching Resources
 - Physical Resources
 - Other Resource Requirements
 - Tuition & Fees
 - Other Revenue
- **Appendix**
 - Program Learning Outcomes, and UDLEs/GDLEs Mapped to Courses & Assessments
 - Contact Teaching Support and Innovation
 - Calendar description and course activation documentation
 - Library Report (written by the Subject Librarian)
 - Feasibility Study (prepared by a Faculty Relations Manager from CEE).
 - Required if the new program includes co-op or work integrated learning

MAPPING OF LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Specific UDLEs and Associated Learning Outcomes	Course					Assessment method							
	XXX 200	XXX 220	XXX 250	XXX 352	XXX 400	Forum communication	Multi-part assignments	Quizzes/Tests	Written assignments/ arguments/policy briefs	Data interpretation, synthesis, visualization	Technical reports/plans	Slide decks/presentations	Video production
1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge													
Demonstrate key elements in XXX and how these elements are being impacted by XXX	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				
2. Knowledge of Methodologies													
3. Application of Knowledge													
4. Communication Skills													
5. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge													
6. Autonomy and Professional Capacity													
7. Experiential Learning													
8. Diversity													



Writing Support for Volume I – Proposal

To move from the Statement of Interest to the Volume I: 3 meetings, over 3-6 months

Meeting 1): Big Picture

- Have we understood what makes your program exciting/compelling/timely?
- Have we understood what differentiates the proposed program from current offerings?
- Define ways of working (e.g., Use shared document, or not? Who to involve?)
- Articulate timeline (Milestone checklist will be provided)

Writing Support for Volume I – Proposal (continued)

Meeting 2): Detail Gathering

- A list of detailed questions provided ahead of time
- Check in on key components that include other Academic Support Units (TSI, CEE, etc.)

Meeting 3): Finalizing

- Opportunity for changes following review of completed proposal
- Covering off outstanding questions

TUITION OPTIONS

- If the degree designation offered is an **existing UW degree designation** (e.g. Bachelors of Arts, Master of Science, etc.) the **existing UW tuition rate** for this degree must be used. See [tuition rates](#).
- **New tuition rate being proposed:**
 - Degree designation should be unique.
 - Program should find comparator programs in Ontario (or Canada) and the associated tuition rates to justify new rate.
 - If the proposed rate is higher than comparator programs, explain how the new program significantly differs from comparators to support the high rate.
 - Rationale very critical for getting Ministry approval and grant.
- If suggesting a **full cost recovery program**, please note that there are implications for going this route:
 - The University will not receive Ministry grant for this program.
 - Students will not be eligible for OSAP.
 - This makes the program possibly more expensive for students, which can affect interest in the program and enrolment.
 - Reliable data needed demonstrating high student demand for this program to justify cost investment/risk.
 - Significant internal discussions to determine the financial viability of the program can cause additional delays in the approval process.

Phase 3: APPROVAL

1. Undergraduate or Graduate Sub-committee and Faculty Council approval.
2. External reviewers site visit.
3. Program and Dean response to reviewers' recommendations.
4. AQuE Office submits to SUC/SGC and Senate for approval.
5. AQuE Office submits to Quality Council* (academic) and IPB submits to MCURES** (tuition, grant & OSAP eligibility) for approval.

**The program is permitted to advertise the new program to students with a disclaimer indicating that it is subject to QC approval.*

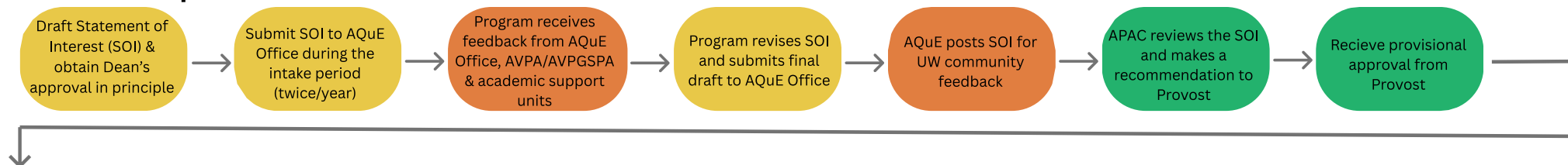
***MCURES approval can take upwards of 6 months.*

Phase 4: IMPLEMENTATION & FOLLOW-UP

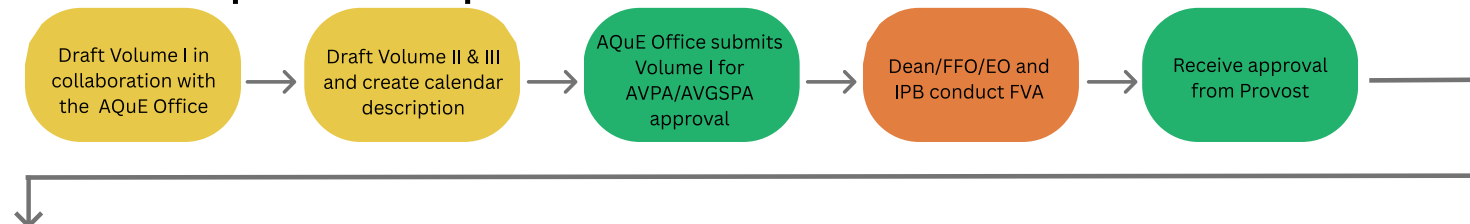
1. Program launches (first student intake).
2. Follow-up report is due if the Quality Council (QC) indicates one is required. They will set the due date for that report.
 - AQuE Office will send reminders to the program in advance of the follow-up report due date.
3. Two-year progress report is conducted.
 - Program to comment on how it has addressed the external reviewers' comments after implementation and intake of student cohorts.
 - Will include a comparison between projected and actual enrolment numbers (a mutually agreed upon due date for the progress report will be set by the AQuE Office and the program).
 - AQuE Office will send reminders to the program in advance of the progress report due date.

New Program Approval Process

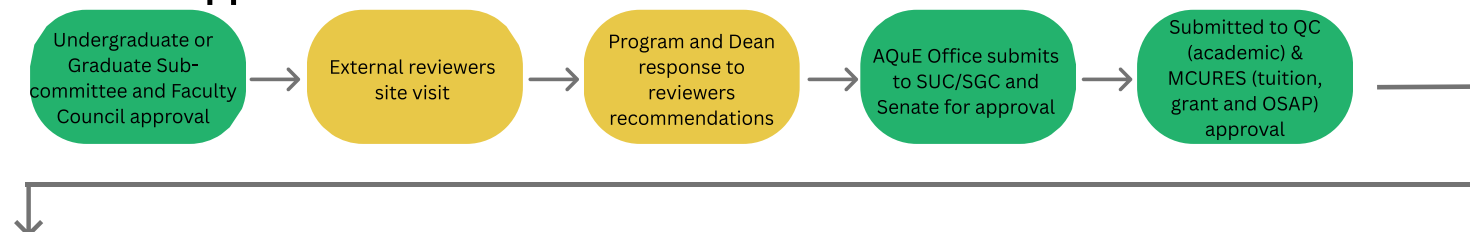
Phase 1: Preparation



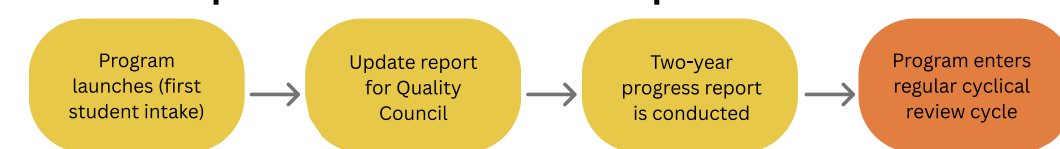
Phase 2: Proposal Development



Phase 3: Approvals



Phase 4: Implementation & Follow-up



Legend

- Responsibility of new program proponents
- Responsibility of the AQuE Office or IPB
- Key approval point

Acronyms

- AQuE** = Academic Quality Enhancement
- AVPA** = Associate Vice-President, Academic
- AVPGSPA** = Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies & Postdoctoral Affairs
- EO** = Executive Officer
- FFO** = Faculty Financial Officer
- FVA** = Financial Viability Analysis
- IPB** = Institutional Planning & Budget
- MCURES** = Ministry of Colleges & Universities and Research
- QC** = Quality Council
- SUC** = Senate Undergraduate Council
- SGC** = Senate Graduate Council

TIMELINES

The development of a new program can take between (*from proposal to student intake*):

- **1-1.5** years (graduate diplomas - expedited)
- **1.5-2.5** years (graduate programs)
- **2.5-3** years (undergraduate programs)

Key Milestones	Time
SOI	5-6 months
Proposal (Volume I, II & III)	4-6 months
FVA & Provost decision	1-2 months
Faculty-level approvals	2-3 months
Site Visit	3 months
Senate-level approvals	2-3 months
Quality Council & MCURES approval	QC – 2 months, MCURES – 6-9 months

TIMELINES FOR 2029/2030 PROGRAM START

Key milestones		
Target effective date	Fall 2029	Fall 2030
MCURES approval for tuition*	Dec. 2028	Oct. 2029
QC approval**	Jul. 2028	Apr. 2029
Senate approval	May/June 2028	Mar. 2029
SUC/SGC approval	Apr. 2028	Jan. 2029
Site visit***	Early Winter 2028	Late Fall 2028
Faculty Council approvals***	Nov. 2027	Sept. 2028
Subcommittee approvals***	Oct. 2027	Jun. 2028
FVA and Provost decision	Sept. 2027	May. 2028
Final draft	Aug. 2027	Apri. 2028
First draft	Jul. 2027	Feb. 2028
APAC decision/Provost provisional approval	Feb. 2027	Sept. 2027
UW community engagement	Jan. 2027	July/Aug. 2027
Final SOI deadline	Dec. 2026	Jun. 2027
Draft SOI deadline	Nov. 2026	Apr. 2027
Solicitation of ideas and information session	Sept/Oct. 2026	Feb. 2027


 No MCURES
 submission for
 Type 2 Graduate
 Diplomas


 No site visit for
 Graduate
 Diplomas



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TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Familiarize yourself with the approval process and work backwards to ensure you meet your deadlines.
- Reach out to us before you get started to ensure you start with a clear perspective.
- Read the Statement of Interest and proposal document guidance carefully to ensure you fully address the requirements.
- Set internal deadlines and plan to ensure no delays. We will provide you with a milestone tracker, customized to your program launch date, to help you with that.
- Reach out to the AQuE Office for any clarification or support needed.
- Respond to comments and feedback in a timely manner.
- Consult the [New Programs](#) website for more information.

KEY CONTACTS:

For questions on new program documents or submission of documents:

Tawnessa Carter, Quality Enhancement Coordinator – New Programs and Research, AQuE Office

For questions on proposal writing:

Catherine Klausen, Academic Program Development Specialist

For general questions on new programs:

Angela Christelis, Director of Academic Quality Enhancement, AQuE Office

For questions on the financial viability analysis and ministry submission:

Carrie MacKinnon Molson, Institutional Analyst, Institutional Planning and Budgeting

For questions on graduate academic matters:

Trevor Clews, Academic Officer, Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs

For questions on degree level expectations:

David Thiessen, Educational Developer – Curriculum and Quality Enhancement, Teaching Support and Innovation

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