

# PL-ACADEMIC-010: Academic Program Review Policy

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	<b>Effective Date:</b>
	<b>Reviewed by EMC on:</b>
	<b>Approved by President on:</b>

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## Source / Authority

This policy was developed by the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the implementation of this policy.

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## Purpose

The purpose of the academic program review policy is to establish standards and procedures for the periodical review of all academic programs offered within Qatar University.

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## Who Should Know This Policy

- President
- Vice President
- Legal Advisor
- Dean
- Director / Departmental Head
- Faculty
- Accounting/ Finance Personnel
- Student
- All Employees

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## Policy Description

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The basic guiding principle of the Academic Program Review policy is the maintenance of academic standards and the enhancement of the quality of academic programs offered within the university in line with the university mission, goals, and strategic plan. Thus, the Academic Program Review Policy and Procedure intends to evaluate a program's quality and to contribute and direct the continuous improvement of all academic programs.

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## Policy Statements

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1. All academic programs offered within the university shall be subject to a comprehensive program review through a regular five to seven years continuous program review cycle to identify program strengths and weaknesses and to identify areas for improvement.
2. The Academic Program Review process should provide sufficient evidence to warrant a decision to maintain and improve, restructure, deactivate or terminate a program.
3. A master program review calendar shall be established by the Office of AVP for Quality Assurance in collaboration with colleges, and approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) to plan for program reviews at the university level and to identify the semester of review for each academic program during the review cycle.
4. Programs may delay the scheduled review process subject to the VPAA's approval. All programs must be reviewed within a period not to exceed seven years.
5. For programs undergoing/scheduled for accreditation, the Academic Program Review should be scheduled while taking into account the accreditation review date in order to avoid duplication of efforts.
6. A college or department may request from the appropriate Associate Vice President (AVP) to schedule joint reviews for related academic programs offered at the department and/or the college.
7. The appropriate AVP, with the approval of VPAA, may recommend additional and/or more frequent reviews if determined to be appropriate based on the program learning outcome assessment processes and recommendations made during the last academic program review.
8. All academic program reviews shall go through external review. However, external visits for accredited programs may be waived with a recommendation of the college dean and the approval of the VPAA.

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## Procedure

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The academic program review procedure involves four main phases:

- **Phase 1:** Initiation Phase
- **Phase 2:** Self Review Phase
- **Phase 3:** Peer Review Phase

- **Phase 4:** Follow up Phase

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## **Steps in Phase 1: The Initiation Phase**

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1. The appropriate AVP office prepares and sends a Program Review Notification Letter and a Program Review Confirmation Form to the dean of the college hosting the programs scheduled for review in the next academic year.
2. The college dean returns the Program Review Confirmation Form to the appropriate AVP notifying his/her agreement with the review schedule or propose an alternative date.
3. If an alternative date is proposed by the college dean, the appropriate AVP consults with the college dean and decides on the final program review date.
4. If the program review date is confirmed for the next academic year, the college dean in consultation with Department Head shall establish an Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) at the program or department level.
5. The office of the appropriate VP schedules an orientation meeting for all programs scheduled for review in the next academic year.

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## **Steps in Phase 2: The Self-Review Phase**

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1. The appropriate AVP office, in collaboration with the Office of the Vice President for Institutional Planning and Development, will prepare and submit the data needed for the self-review phase.
2. The APRC prepares a Self-Study Report (SSR) following a template approved by the appropriate AVP.
3. The APRC discusses the report with the Department Head and Faculty affiliated with the program.
4. The Department Head writes a brief one to two pages summary report about the program and includes a set of recommendations, issues, or concerns that should be addressed during the peer review phase.
5. The Department Head submits the SRR and the brief summary report to the College Dean.
6. The College Dean writes the Dean's summary report including recommendations, issues, or concerns to be addressed during the peer review phase and submits the SSRR with the Department Head's summary report and the Dean's summary report to the appropriate AVP office.

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## **Steps in Phase 3: The Peer Review Phase**

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1. The Appropriate AVP in consultation with the College Dean decides on the members of the Peer-Review Team.
2. The appropriate AVP makes necessary arrangements with members of the peer review team including communicating needed documentation to the peer review team members.
3. Members of the Peer Review Team conduct and complete an in-depth review of the program based on the submitted SSR and the recommendations, issues, or concerns identified by the Department Head and the College Dean.
4. A campus visit by the peer review team is scheduled. However, campus visits for accredited programs may be waived with a recommendation of the college dean and the approval of the VPAA.
5. The peer review team completes a preliminary peer review report to be submitted by the team chair to the College Dean and the Department Head.
6. The College Dean and Department Head review the peer review team report for error of facts or for not considering documents deemed important. The College Dean sends factual corrections or relevant documents to the peer review team chair.
7. The peer review team chair updates the peer review preliminary report based on received corrections and/or documents and submits the final peer review report to the College Dean and the VPAA.

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## **Steps in Phase 4: The Follow up Phase**

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1. Faculty members affiliated with the program reflect on the outcomes of the peer review phase and the peer review team recommendations to devise a general program enhancement plan and to develop responses to each of the peer review team recommendations.
2. The program responses and the general program enhancement plan are reviewed by the appropriate AVP and approved by the VPAA
3. Following approval by the VPAA of the program responses and the general program enhancement plan, faculty affiliated with the program develop the details of the program enhancement plan by defining:

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- Improvement strategies and improvement actions,
- Detailed action plans for each improvement action.
- Specific milestones and checkpoints to evaluate progress

The action plans should identify the needed resources and estimate the associated financial costs. The detailed program enhancement plan and the developed action plans shall be approved by the VPAA. The appropriate AVP will be responsible for monitoring progress in the implementation of the adopted action plans.