

Quality Assurance Review Advisory Committee

The Department Education, Culture, and Employment (ECE) is committed to ensuring high quality post-secondary education for all learners attending post-secondary Institutions in the Northwest Territories (NWT). In 2019 the *Post-Secondary Education Act* was given assent making it possible for post-secondary institutions to apply for a Certificate of Registration. The Certificate of Registration is an acknowledgement that the institution has met industry standards approved by ECE and learners can be assured they will receive a quality education.

The Quality Assurance Review Advisory Committee (QARAC) is the quality assurance standing committee. QARAC makes recommendations to the Minister of ECE on standards to be met by post-secondary education institutions, applications for ministerial consent, and monitoring reports. QARAC carries out system coordination reviews and quality assurance reviews as directed by the Minister. QARAC also monitors certificate of registration conditions and NWT institutions to ensure that quality standards continue to be met.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the QARAC is to facilitate the quality assurance process and provide feedback and recommendation to the Minister.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- *Accessible* – programs, courses and teaching styles that meet the needs of students from a variety of backgrounds, abilities, and learning styles, while providing access to students from all communities in the Northwest Territories (NWT)
- *Accountable* – ensuring recognized post-secondary institutions are transparent and held accountable for achieving their own mission and goals
- *Equitable* – one’s personal conditions do not interfere with their potential to achieve education goals. Equity occurs when everyone has what they need to succeed, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status
- *High Quality* – best practices are applied in the design and delivery of their programming to meet national standards
- *Relevant* – post-secondary education opportunities are responsive to the NWT labour market demands and community needs
- *Student-centered* – Student independence and performance are supported by guiding them in becoming responsible for their learning paths and empowering them to make informed choices about their learning

- *Members of the Committee will:*
 - Respect the three Ps: Prepare (for meetings), Participate (in discussions), and Produce (results);
 - Work collaboratively to recommend how key actions should be implemented;
 - Be cognizant of performance measurement when recommending decisions;
 - Support the implementation of key actions as guided by the Committee;
 - Consider all points of view; and
 - Strive for consensus in all decision-making.

SCOPE

The scope of the QARAC is to administer the quality assurance process. The quality assurance process includes:

- Drafting, reviewing, and monitoring standards that are to be adhered to by NWT post-secondary education institutions;
- Coordinating system reviews on all post-secondary education applications;
- Coordinating quality assurance reviews on all private training institution and private vocational training applications;
- Selecting subject matter expert review panels;
- Reviewing all annual reporting, and correlate the information with the objectives set out in the NWT Post-Secondary Education System Accountability Framework;
- Receiving:
 - Final assessment reports and implementation plans;
 - Annual reports;
 - Quality assurance related requests from institutions;
- Monitor the NWT Post-Secondary Education System Accountability Framework and update, including making recommendations to modify or add new objectives, as required;
- Monitoring Certificate of Registration:
 - Schedule;
 - Terms and conditions;
 - Recommendations;
 - To verify that institutions are internally assessing their existing programs and activities and continue to meet the NWT standards;
- Carrying out audits as directed by the Minister;
- Advising the Minister; and

- Administer process accountability:
 - Collect process data;
 - monitor and evaluate for improvement; and
 - develop and implement improvement.

Excluded from the scope of the QARAC are:

- Quality assurance reviews for university institution applications;
- Quality assurance reviews for degree program applications; and
- Investigations and/or inspections, with the exception of recommending an investigation or inspection.

MONITOR AND EVALUATION OF QARAC (Process Accountability)

- Applicants are notified within 48 hours that their system coordination application has been received.
- System coordination review is carried out by the QARAC within 15 business days and forwarded to the Director of Labour Development and Standards.
- Full application review is completed by QARAC within 45 business days and provided to the Director of Labour Development and Standards.
- Letter of decision and certificate of registration is forwarded to the Minister's office for signature within 10 business days of receiving the Minister's direction.
- Letter of decision, certificate of registration and electronic symbol are forwarded to institution within 10 business days of receiving the signed documents from the Minister's office.
- Annual reports are reviewed and correlated within 20 business days of receiving the last report from the NWT institutions (institutions commonly have 90 days to provide an annual report from June 30; it is expected all reports will be received by September 30th).

MEMBERSHIP

To ensure that the QARAC has sufficient diversity and sustainability, representing a broad range of perspectives, the membership is broken into core and subject matter experts. A core membership team will administer the operational processes and carry out system coordination reviews. The core membership will also be responsible for adding subject matter experts to the committee that specifically supports each individual application.

Core Membership Team:

The core membership team will consist of members appointed by the Minister, who must be members of the public service:

- Manager of Advanced Education;
- Quality Assurance Coordinator;
- Advanced Education Coordinators (2 positions);
- Manager of Labour Market Programs;
- Manager of Student Financial Assistance;
- Indigenous Language and Culture Coordinator;
- Financial Planning and Budget Coordinator; and
- Curriculum Coordinator.

Subject Matter Experts:

A subject matter expert review panel will be assembled specific to the application under review.

- Submit review information and recommendation to the Minister

TERM OF COMMITTEE

The terms of reference will be reviewed and updated every three years.

CHAIR

QARAC will be chaired by the Manager of Advanced Education and Strategic Initiatives.

MEETINGS

Meetings will be called as required.

An agenda will be prepared in advance and distributed by the Chair.

The Chair will document records of decisions and distribute to the membership.

APPROVED



R.J. Simpson
Minister, Education, Culture,
and Employment

January 31, 2023

Date