

Guidelines and Process for Selecting External Reviewers

Criteria for External Reviewers

To maintain the integrity of the Academic Quality Assurance process, the External Reviewers:

1. Must be from outside the University of Lethbridge.
2. Must have attained the rank of full professor.
3. Must have at least five years experience in a continuing or tenured appointment as a faculty member at a university.
4. Must have doctoral degrees or terminal degrees in a discipline that is the same as, or closely related to, the program or unit under review.
5. In at least one case, should be from an institution similar in size to the University of Lethbridge.
6. Are normally Canadian residents, but can be from outside Canada if costs are feasible.
7. Must not have any of the following connections within the past five years with the University of Lethbridge:
 - Collaboration with a University of Lethbridge faculty member, professional librarian, instructor, or adjunct faculty member.
 - Mentorship of a University of Lethbridge faculty member, professional librarian, instructor, or adjunct faculty member.
 - Served as an external examiner for a Ph.D. of a faculty member or professional librarian of the program or unit under review.
8. Must not have been an External Reviewer for a previous academic quality assurance review of the program or unit under review.

The Self Study Committee can write to the AQAC Chair to request an External Reviewer be exempt from one or more of criteria 1 to 8. This request for exemption will then be reviewed at an AQAC meeting and a motion for granting or not granting the request will be voted upon by the committee.

9. Must not have any of the following connections within the past five years with the University of Lethbridge:
 - Served as a faculty member, instructor, adjunct faculty member, or employee of the University of Lethbridge.
 - Received a degree from the program or unit under review.
 - A close family relationship with a member of the program or unit under review.
 - Served as a Master's or Doctoral supervisor of anyone in the program or unit under review.
 - Served on the supervisory committee of anyone in the program or unit under review.
 - Co-authorship with a University of Lethbridge faculty member, instructor, or adjunct faculty member.

Select and Approve the List of External Reviewers

The Program Review Coordinator develops a list of two or more potential External Reviewers, ranked in order of preference. The list includes, for each individual:

- Name, position, institution, and email address.
- Brief background information and rationale.
- A curriculum vitae, if freely available online.

The Program Review Coordinator also completes and signs the Statement of Non-Conflict for External Reviewers (see Appendix Five).

The Review Coordinator forwards the list of potential External Reviewers and the signed Statement of Non-Conflict for External Reviewers to the Dean.

The Dean reviews the list of potential External Reviewers and then takes one of four actions:

- **Approve the list**—If the Dean approves the list, then the Dean's office informs the Program Review Coordinator and begins the process of contacting the External Reviewer candidates (see below).
- **Amend and approve the list**—The Dean may approve the list, but veto an individual(s) on the list that he or she deems inappropriate, or modify the ranking of the list. After approval, the Dean's office informs the Program Review Coordinator and begins the process of contacting the External Reviewer candidates (see ***Contact External Reviewers*** below).
- **Amend and return the list for revision**—The Dean may veto any individual(s) on the list that they deem inappropriate. If the Dean vetoes one or more names on the list and the number of potential reviewers falls below two, the Dean returns the list to the Program Review Coordinator for additional names to be added.
- **Add names and approve the list**—If the Dean adds additional External Reviewers to the list, the Dean must sign a Statement of Non-Conflict for External Reviewers and forward the amended list and the form to the Program Review Coordinator. The Program Review Coordinator reviews the amended list, also signs the non-conflict statement, and forwards the list and the statement to the Chair of the Academic Quality Assurance Committee for approval. After receiving approval, the Dean continues with contacting the potential External Reviewers (see ***Contact External Reviewers*** below).

Contact External Reviewers

The Dean contacts the individuals on the approved list, proceeding in the ranked order, to secure two of them (or more if required) as External Reviewers.

Once the required number of individuals have agreed to serve as an External Reviewer, the Dean forwards the names of the External Reviewers to the Program Review Coordinator, who is then responsible for arranging the site visit (see ***Prepare for site visit***). The Program Review Coordinator must forward a copy of the approved list of potential External Reviewers to the Chair of the Academic Quality Assurance Committee.

If the Dean cannot secure the services of two External Reviewers from the list of candidates, then the process of selecting External Reviewers must begin again.

In summary, there are three points of contact with the External Reviewers:

1. By the Dean, during the selection process.
2. By the Program Review Coordinator and/or the Administrative Assistant of the program or unit under review, to arrange the details of the site visit.
3. By the Chair of the Academic Quality Assurance Committee, to send the review documents in advance of the site visit (see page 11), to follow up on the status of the External Review Report, and to inform the External Reviewers about the outcomes of the review.

Up to the point of the Site Visit, no other contact with the External Reviewers should be made.