

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

A. CONCLUSIONS

This Audit Team concludes that Durham College, though very much in the formative stages of its *new* Program Quality Assurance Process, has set in place the foundations of a viable and comprehensive quality assurance program. It is based on a foundation of ongoing curriculum renewal coupled with a long-standing program review approach. The new Program Quality Assurance Process (PQAP) is just now being launched and should effectively meet Ministry requirements and see the College through its next phase of development.

The Audit Team met with members of Senior Management, Academic Managers, Support Service Managers and Support Staff, faculty, students, Program Teams who have undergone or are currently undergoing formal reviews, and the team that developed the Program Quality Assurance Process and the Self-Study (see Appendix A for list of Interviewees).

It is noted that significant and positive change has been felt in the administrative structure over the past two years. This coupled with a revitalized strategic plan and enhanced focus on student learning has literally transformed Durham College and is creating a cultural shift that is being felt by all constituents and stakeholders. This shift is seen as positive and energy-producing.

We were most impressed by the enthusiasm, pride and sense of collegiality that the employees expressed about their College. Likewise, the students who were interviewed were generally satisfied by their programs of study. They enjoyed the relationships they fostered with their faculty and program staff and indicated, to a person, that they would recommend Durham College to friends and relatives.

The Audit Team was able to visit and tour two of Durham's campuses, specifically, the Whitby and the Oshawa facilities. The unique relationship that the Oshawa Campus enjoys with UOIT certainly was seen to have discernable benefits, specifically, a broad spectrum of support services and remarkable, first-class learning and recreational facilities.

Our Team felt very welcome and our hosts were certainly most accommodating to all of our needs and requests. We appreciated the candor and openness of all whom we met.

B. OVERALL FINDINGS OF PANEL

Criterion	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Criterion 1	X		
Criterion 2		X	
Criterion 3	X		
Criterion 4	X		
Criterion 5		X	

Explanations for **PARTIALLY MET** ratings:

- 2.6 As identified in the Self-Study (page 9), “some programs at Durham College have not yet been mapped against provincial standards.” Additionally, as noted further, “while...some older programs include general education..., many programs do not currently meet those requirements.”
- 2.8 It was observed that there was a lack of official process(es) to track and document both course and program changes between the academic area and the Registrar’s office and other stakeholders.
- 5.1 Though the College is well on its way to meeting this Criterion, the *new* PQAP process is not yet mature enough to provide solid evidence that recommendations resulting from this program review process are systematically addressed.
- 5.2 As above, the *new* Program Quality Assurance Process is not yet mature enough to yield sufficient data to satisfy this Criterion.

C. COMMENDATIONS

The Audit Team makes the following commendations:

- a. The “attitude” expressed by the PQAPA team in its internal communications regarding the new QA initiatives, including the very unique “BONK” show, are to be commended. The Team seems upbeat, collegial and capable of seeing these QA initiatives through to fruition.
- b. The look and feel of the Program Guides, and their apparent effectiveness from the students’ perspective, are to be commended. They are very professional looking, they appear to be consistently used across program areas and their content seems relevant and most useful.
- c. The Innovation Centre appears most effective as a resource for all college programs, specifically in the areas of curriculum mapping, teaching and learning strategies and in the rejuvenation opportunity that it provides for faculty members via secondment opportunity.
- d. The newly-created Office of Institutional Research and Government Relations is already being recognized by internal stakeholders as adding significant value

- to the College and, specifically, to the Program Quality Assurance Process. This level of resourcing the new PQAP initiative is most commendable.
- e. Along similar lines, the Administration is commended overall for providing first class facilities, resources and amenities to augment student learning and student life at Durham College.

D. AFFIRMATIONS

The Audit Team affirms the following that appear in the Self Study document:

- a. The self-recognition that the new leadership structure has made significant progress in the management and organization of programs and the implementation of quality assurance initiatives.
- b. That the Self-Study was introspective and self-analytical enough to identify required updating of certain policies and practices (i.e., General Education Policy, improved curriculum mapping process, and improving documentation, and the tracking and quality of the annual program curriculum review, to name a few).
- c. In general, the Audit Team agrees with and endorses the list of recommendations and supporting strategies put forth in the Self-Study. The candor with which this analysis was conducted is admirable.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit Team respectfully makes the following recommendations:

- a. That a roster of slated formal Program Reviews be developed to clearly indicate the intent and timeframes germane to the new Program Quality Assurance Process.
- b. That a reporting template be developed for use in the Program Quality Assurance Process that will effectively ensure consistent reporting of findings and recommendations. Further, an Executive Summary template might also be considered for adoption as part of this reporting mechanism, which could also be connected to the report to the Board of Governors.
- c. That consideration be given to finding ways to include non-academic areas more in the program review process.
- d. That the new Policies that are under review be time tagged to indicate date of development or revision, date of effectiveness, and date of next renewal.
- e. That a formal Complaints Policy and Procedure be considered to handle general student complaints. Evidence provided by students suggested that no formal complaints policy or process currently exists.