Ontario College Quality Assurance Service
Service de l'assurance de la qualité des
collèges de l'Ontario

COLLEGE QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDIT PROCESS (CQAAP)

AUDIT REPORT

GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE

DATE OF SITE VISIT: November 10-12, 2021

PREPARATION DATE: November 28, 2021

SUBMISSION DATE: December 8, 2021

PREPARED BY: Alan Davis

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APPROVAL OF THE AUDIT REPORT

This report represents the findings of the College Quality Assurance Audit Panel for *George Brown College.*

This report has been prepared, reviewed, and accepted by all parties to the Audit, including George Brown College's President, members of the Audit Panel, and the Chair of the OCQAS Management Board. The signatures of the representative parties demonstrate their acceptance of the content of this report.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Dr Gervan Fearon Signature:	Date: June 1, 2022

CHAIR- OCQAS MANAGEMENT BOARD

Charles Pankratz Signature:	Date: March 3, 2022

AUDIT PANEL MEMBERS

Alan Davis, Chair Signature:	Date: January 19, 2022
Lindita Prendi Signature:	Date: January 19, 2022
Don Duclos Signature:	Date: January 19, 2022
Geoff Cudmore Signature:	Date: January 19, 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Conclusions**
   General comments and summary of the findings of the audit panel.

The Audit Panel found very strong agreement with the results and affirmations of the GBC Self-Study. Copious evidence was provided by the College for almost all Standards and Requirements, and the College showed that it is well-organized around, and is focussed on quality assurance.

Five of six standards were deemed to have been "Met" and the other was deemed "Partially Met", though with clear plans and intentions to fully satisfy the Standard in the next 2 years. Implementation of some related affirmations and recommendations of the previous audit were hampered by a strike, the pandemic and a malware attack, as well as the usual complications and delays of installing complex enterprise systems.

The Audit Panel's decision therefore is that George Brown College's overall effort in its QA Self -Study, evidence and practice is "Mature".

The Audit Panel would like to thank President Fearon and his team, especially the Office of Academic Excellence (Juanita Wattam-Simeon and Chris Sinclair) for their engagement and responsiveness to this process.

Among the commendations to be found in this report, the Audit Panel would highlight the following:

- The College has a deep and wide culture of Quality Assurance, both in its formal processes and in the informal approaches that fill any gaps. There is an obvious commitment to continuous improvement throughout the organization.
- The emergence of an Academic Quality Dashboard, phase 1 of which is now in place, provides real-time and historical data to academic leaders on all of their programs.
- The College has a robust New Program Development set of policies, procedures and tools. There includes thorough scoping and research of any new proposal, a 3-stage approval process, plus a review after years 1 and 2 of implementation where the full suite of metrics is captured and presented in at the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board to ensure that programs are performing as promised. This is a process that could be shared system-wide as a model.
- GBC has a very active Teaching and Learning centre, and the panel heard from various employees that Universal Design for Learning was well understood and deployed as a framework for quality curriculum development and revision.

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> - The audit panel commends the college on the robustness of the relationship with the PAC's as an instrument of quality, and the obvious priority placed on building strong partnerships with business and industry by all levels of the College.

2. **Results**

    a. **Summary of the Audit Results**

Standard	Result		
1	☒Met	☐ Partially Met	☐ Not Met
2	☒ Met	☐ Partially Met	☐ Not Met
3	☒ Met	☐ Partially Met	☐ Not Met
4	☒ Met	☐ Partially Met	☐ Not Met
5	☒ Met	☐ Partially Met	☐ Not Met
6	☐ Met	☒ **Partially Met**	☐ Not Met

Audit Decision: *(select one)*

☒ **Mature Effort**
☐ Organized Effort
☐ Formal Effort

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STIPULATIONS

1. **Commendations**
   Provide clear statements that articulate areas where the college has shown exemplary or leadership in the field of quality assurance and improvement. These are mechanisms that are especially good and may be worthy of emulation by other colleges in the system.

There is much to commend with regard to George Brown College's QA systems and approaches.

There is a clear connection between what happens in the schools and departments at GBC and the strategic and business plans, and there is a deep level of commitment to the mission and vision of the College. This is a vital underpinning of a robust and widely adopted QA system.

The system of QA is complex as would be expected for a large, urban institution, but people at all levels understood and appreciated the processes and controls. The culture of QA is deep, both in the formal processes and the informal approaches.

The College has embraced the "paradox of the pandemic" and the Audit Panel saw evidence many times of people seeing opportunity for positive change as a result, rather than dwelling on what may have been lost. For example, accommodations for students that might be continued, and the digitization of services and process for greater efficiency and flexibility for all.

The governance of QA at GBC works well with no discernable discontinuities between the Board, administration, faculty and students.

The emergence of an Academic Quality Dashboard, phase 1 of which is now in place, provides real-time and historical data to academic leaders on all of their programs. Further development of this is encouraged.

The College has a robust New Program Development set of policies, procedures and tools, and it also engages in post-launch follow after 2 years to ensure that the program is on track as proposed.

GBC has a very active Teaching and Learning Exchange (TLX), offering robust training programs, and the Panel heard from various employees that Universal Design for Learning was well understood and deployed as a framework for quality curriculum development and revision.

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2. **Affirmations**
   Provide clear statements that articulate areas where the college itself has found a weakness, identified the weakness, and intends to correct it (a plan of action has already been articulated). In effect, this is affirming the college's judgment and findings of its own self-study.

The Audit Panel is pleased to endorse the College's 9 Affirmations, as listed below.

Affirmation #1: Enhance the portfolio review process. [Related Requirements: 1.1; 1.2; 6.6]

Affirmation #2: Develop a more integrated and comprehensive program lifecycle. [Key Related Requirements 1.2; 1.4; 2.1]

Affirmation #3: Re-conceptualize program review processes leveraging the Program Quality Assurance (QA) Dashboard's real-time data to streamline and simplify reporting processes and tracking processes, and to enhance focus on curriculum. While the College believes its current program review processes to be a strength of its QA systems the QA Dashboard presents real opportunities to further refine the process. [Related Requirements: 1.2; 1.4]

Affirmation #4: In order to better support faculty teams the College will build out digital curriculum assistants: digitized tutorials, resources, and coaching available asynchronously for faculty to access "anywhere, anytime" to develop curriculum and program design skills and quality assurance know-how. [Related Requirement: 1.2]

Affirmation #5: In keeping with the College's revised PAC Policy and its 2030 commitment to building interconnected partnerships with institutions, industry and community, George Brown will update the current PAC Guidelines Manual while building enhanced digital infrastructure to college programs that will allow George Brown to better leverage relationships with this key constituency while enhancing program quality. [Related Requirement: 3.3]

Affirmation #6: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Framework: To better scaffold and support teaching innovation and experimentation as well as the systematic evaluation of impact and dissemination of findings, George Brown College will develop and deploy a framework to support faculty development and engagement in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). [Related Requirements: 4.2, 6.1, 6.2]

Affirmation #7: Leverage the College's newly updated Online Design Principles and Framework to guide the design and/or updating of online courses. [Related Requirement: 4.1]

Affirmation #8: George Brown College will continue roll-out of an updated performance development process for all employees: faculty, administration, and support staff, beginning with administrators in Fall 2021. Professional development plans will be established for all

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employees and will be tracked centrally using the College's Cornerstone system. [Related Requirements: 6.1-6.5 inclusive]

Affirmation #9: The College will complete Project RiSE (Re-Imagining Student Experience through Process Innovation & Service Integration). This innovative project ensures a seamless experience for students engaging with GBC student-facing services. Optimizing students' student service experience across the lifecycle (current students, applicants and prospects) will reduce students' stress levels, producing a more constructive experience for faculty in the classroom. [Related Requirements: 6.3-6.5]

3. **Recommendations**
   Provide clear statements that articulate areas as needing improvement. Recommendations may also be made in relation to areas of concern identified by the college in its self-study, and for which no plan of action has been articulated by the college.

- Recommendation 1 [Requirement 2.2]: The Audit Panel recommends that the College continues to evolve its CLO and PVLO mapping processes beyond the program development and review processes to ensure that faculty and students have a clear understanding of the alignment of their CLOs to the program outcomes.

- Recommendation 2. [Requirement 3.4]: The Audit Panel recommends that the College clarify roles and responsibilities, and document how changes to program standards are communicated across the organization.

- Recommendation 3. [Requirement 6.1]: The Audit Panel recommends that the college finalize and implement evaluation processes for faculty to meet the 2016 audit recommendation as soon as possible. It is hoped that the development and implementation capture many of the rich informal processes that were described to the audit panel during the virtual site-visit.

- Recommendation 4. [Requirement 6.4]: The Audit Panel recommends that the college finalize and implement evaluation and IDP processes for non-teaching faculty to meet the 2016 audit recommendation as soon as possible.

- Recommendation 5. [All Requirements]: This Audit Panel Report is a very positive one for George Brown College and the College's Self-Study was accurate and honest. Furthermore, given the pace of change in the workplace and in higher education, there is no time for complacency. The nine Affirmations, along with the Audit Panel's recommendations provide a framework for continuous improvement and we encourage the College to keep QA at the core of its thinking and operations.