

Phase II: Engaging External Reviewers

Overview of Phase II

The external review process is in place to provide the department / program with an outside perspective of its role in the institution and the community, internal and external relationships, and its strategic priorities. The Reviewers' Report provides the department / program with actionable suggestions that can be integrated into the Implementation Plan that will inform strategic priorities over the next five years.

Timeline

Spring of Year 6: Determine reviewers

Fall of Year 7: Host a visit by your external reviewers and receive feedback.

(These years determined by the [APR cycle calendar](#).)

Determine Reviewers

Once you have completed the draft of your Self-Study Report (in Phase 1), develop a list of possible external reviewers to be shared with your Dean (or the Associate Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs for Interdisciplinary Programs), as follows. Taking a page from the Middle States process, first identify a couple of peer departments (or programs) and a couple of aspirational departments (or programs).

- A “peer department” would be a department at another institution that plays a similar role there as your department does here (similar programs, similar students served, similar outcomes, etc.).
- An “aspirational department” would be a department at another institution that your department aspires to be more similar to in some aspect (programmatically, student outcomes, student placement after degree, connectedness to their community, etc.)

After determining these peer and aspirational departments, suggest a couple names of possible reviewers from both “peer departments” and “aspirational departments” to your Dean (or AP). You will have a conversation with your Dean (or AP) about which of the reviewers should be chosen to conduct the review.

Your department / program should finalize your list of reviewers by the end of Spring of Year 6.

Note: It is important that the reviewers be impartial in this process. Any conflicts of interest in the people you propose as reviewers (co-authorship, close friendships) should be disclosed and avoided where possible.

Engage Reviewers

Contact your reviewers in the Spring of Year 6 or early thereafter to secure a commitment to review early in the Fall of Year 7.

Departments / programs will coordinate the schedule of the visit, taking into account reviewer, Dean (or AP), and Provost availability. The visit should be scheduled to ensure the greatest possible participation of department/program members, including faculty and students.

The department/program will send a copy of the final Self-Study Report at least two weeks before the visit to the reviewers and directly to the Provost (not a strawman account).

Host a Visit

The site visit will typically involve two full days on campus, or engaged remotely if that modality is chosen by the department/program. Minimally it will include:

1. A meeting with the dean;
2. A tour of facilities;
3. Examination of additional material, e.g., course syllabi, sample examinations and student work, and scholarly and creative works of the faculty;
4. Meetings with the chairperson and P&B;
5. Meetings with the full-time faculty;
6. Meetings with adjunct personnel, graduate students, and staff;
7. Meetings with students and, if possible, recent graduates;
8. Attending classes;
9. An exit interview with the provost.

After the visit, the chair / director should send a thank you message and ensure timely payment of the reviewers.

Reviewer's Report

The external reviewers should submit a jointly written evaluation report following their in-person and/or virtual visit to Queens College. This report should provide an external view of the following areas:

- Assessment of the department/program's strengths and weaknesses
- Examination of all degree programs in the department/program
- Review of plans for future development

The report should conclude with the reviewers' actionable recommendations.

Budget

Departments / programs receive a fixed budget allocation for the review process. This budget can be spent on travel and honoraria for reviewers and on food to encourage attendance at events throughout the visit. Be sure to pay attention to the source of the allocated funds to determine the reimbursement procedures and any forms that may need to be collected from the reviewers.