



Title: Program Review and Development Procedures

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Review: The procedures are subject to periodic reviews as per amendments of Program
Review and Development Policy

1. Purpose

This document describes how Gulf University's procedures on program review and development will be implemented. The procedures document aims to ensure that implementation of program review and development process is standardized across all Colleges and Departments.

2. Scope

These procedures apply to all programs offered at Gulf University.

3. Acronyms

BQA	Education and Training Quality Authority
CILOS	Course Intended Learning Outcomes
C-PRDC	College Program Review and Development Committee
HEC	Higher Education Council
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PILOS	Program Intended Learning Outcomes
U-PRDC	University Program Review and Development Committee

4. Definitions

Advisory Board: The Advisory Board advises departments incorporated in Gulf University on the strategic direction of both Gulf University and individual departments in order to further the interests and reputation of Gulf University and the Kingdom of Bahrain in general. This advice can extend to program development, student recruitment and retention and can serve to foster relations with the business community, local government, and other external stakeholders.

Benchmarking: Benchmarking involves comparing university processes and practices against good practices in other Higher Education Institutions.

Course: A course is composed of teaching and learning activities, which guide and support students towards the attainment of a set of learning outcomes. A course is the smallest unit of teaching and learning activities at Gulf University.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes: Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) describe the knowledge, skills and attributes envisaged to be achievable by students who have been enrolled in a course. CILOs therefore contribute to PILOs.

External Reviewer: External reviewer refers to an academician in the domain of the program outside the University at national, regional, and international level with adequate experience in program design and development. He/she provides feedback and recommendations on the current program and subsequently on revised program to the Review Team after reviewing the program documents in detail.

Graduate Attributes: Graduate attributes refer to the characteristics a graduate is expected to display upon having completed a program associated with the qualification that has been awarded. Graduate attributes refer to the personal qualities, academic capabilities and more general skills developed as a result of following the program.

Internal Reviewer: Internal reviewer refers to an academic staff of the college with specialization in one of the domains of the program. He/she provides feedback and recommendations on the current program and subsequently on revised program to the Review Team after reviewing the program documents in detail.

Mapping: Mapping refers to the process of placing qualifications on Bahrain National Qualifications Framework. This process requires the credit value of qualifications to be stated and for qualifications to be placed at the appropriate level on the NQF.

Notional Learning Hours: Notional learning hours describe time allocated to study. This study time can comprise formal classroom instruction, time spent in self-study (for example, reading and revising notes) and time spent on assessment. Notional learning hours are calculated by those with experience in the subject area by envisaging the time that the average student would spend on tasks required by a course or program.

NQF Credit: A NQF credit is a measurement of learning at specific levels of a National Qualifications Framework. It is assumed that one credit of learning will result from ten 'notional' hours of study. Credits are assigned to courses, programs, and qualifications. The credits assigned to qualifications comply with Bahrain National Qualifications Framework.

NQF Level: Bahrain National Qualifications Framework comprises ten levels. Each level signifies a stage of achievement with respect to learning ranging from the less to the more complex and demanding.

NQF Level Descriptors: NQF Level descriptors provide a general, shared understanding of learning and achievement at each of the ten levels of the NQF. Each descriptor relates to generic statements that describe the expected level of achievement with respect to:

- Knowledge (theoretical understanding and practical application)
- Skills (generic, problem solving, analytical skill and communication, ICT, numeracy)
- Competence (autonomy, responsibility, and context).

Level descriptors are used to map qualifications to NQF and were designed to be used across a wide range of learning contexts.

Program: A program is a carefully designed and structured series of teaching and learning activities which support and guide students towards the achievement of the intended learning outcomes set for it.

Program Intended Learning Outcomes: Program Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) describe the knowledge, skills and attributes envisioned to be achievable by students who have followed a program of study. Demonstration of achievement of the PILOs is a necessary requirement for the award of a qualification associated with a program.

Purpose Statement: A purpose statement describes the overall goal or purpose of a program of study by, for example, describing the way graduates of the program will contribute to workplace needs or to society more generally. It can also describe the way the program contributes to the vision and mission of the institution offering the program.

Qualification: A qualification recognizes and certifies the learning achieved as a result of following a program of study. It therefore signifies and certifies the achievement of the PILOs by a student who has followed the program.

5. Procedure Details

5.1 Annual Review

5.1.1 Department Council shall form a team by May to elicit feedback from stakeholders and reflect on this feedback to identify strengths and weaknesses. This process shall include information, feedback, and analysis from the first and second semesters on:

- Students Evaluations on courses and instructors, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F01).
- Instructors Course Reports, (Form GU-PR04TL-F06).
- Peer Reviews, (Form GU-PR04TL-F05).
- C-TLAC recommendations on assessment verification and moderation (Internal and external).
- Feedback on Internship, (Forms GU-PR05INT-F010 and GU-PR05INT-F011).
- Feedback on Graduation Projects, (Forms GU-PR06GRP-F07 and GU-PR06GRP-F08).
- Students' progressions reports.
- Utilization of physical resources (labs, studios, and workshops).
- Utilization of learning resources (library and online resources).
- Recommendations of Advisory Board.
- Reflections of recent research.

Additionally, program leader (HOD) shall provide the team with the mapping schemes of staffing, physical, and learning resources for the program.

5.1.2 Program Team shall propose minor revisions in the program related to:

- Course prerequisites,
- CILOs to enhance the achievement of PILOs,
- Course contents to enhance the achievement of learning outcome,
- Addition or removal of elective courses,
- Development of Teaching, learning, and Assessment strategies,
- Changes in the Admission criteria and process.

Additionally, Program Team shall propose enhancements of staffing, physical and learning resources, and shall prepare improvement plan.

Program Team shall send all proposals and improvement plan to the Department Council.

5.1.3 Department Council shall review and provide recommendations to C-PRDC for minor modifications. Following documents shall be attached:

- Reports on students' evaluations on courses and instructors,
- Reports on peer reviews,
- Reports on teaching, learning, and assessment,
- Report on justification of program modifications,

5.1.4 C-PRDC shall review the recommendation for minor revisions received from Department Council and shall collaborate with the Program Team for further clarifications, followed by forwarding its recommendations for approval to the college council.

5.1.5 College Council shall review the recommended program minor revisions and shall collaborate with C-PRDC for further clarifications (if needed).

The council shall approve, reject, or partially approve the modifications and issue a resolution for implementation by the relevant department.

5.2 Periodic Review

5.2.1 Every five/six academic years (after the graduation of the first batch of the program), each department shall conduct a periodic review process for the offered programs. The current program shall be reviewed initially by Internal and External Reviewers based on the program documents and inputs given by internal and external stakeholders.

5.2.2 *Criteria for selecting Internal Reviewers*

The candidate shall:

- i. have specialized subject knowledge in program area under review,
- ii. possess appropriate academic experience in the concerned discipline of the program,

- iii. have exposure to industry or labor market needs within the domains of the program under review,
- iv. have sufficient knowledge of the requirements of the program accreditation bodies at national and international level,
- v. have awareness of recent practices in program design and development,
- vi. be familiar with quality assurance practices and maintenance of academic standards at national and international level,
- vii. possess diverse background and have work experience in similar accredited program in reputed higher education institutions across regions or countries,
- viii. preferably have research publication in the area of program design, review and development.

5.2.3 Role of Internal Reviewer

- i. Review the documents related to current program namely, alignment with University Mission, Strategic Directions and Graduate Attributes, compliance with regulations of Accreditation Bodies, Program Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs), Program Specifications, Course Specifications, Teaching and Learning Strategy, Assessment Design, Staffing, Availability of Resources, and Semester Report of HODs.
- ii. Prepare the feedback report on the quality of the current program.
- iii. Review the justification of needs for the revised program, feedback from internal and external stakeholders, benchmarking report, published National and International reports in related program, mapping of PILOs to staffing, and mapping of PILOs to facilities and resources.
- iv. Review the curriculum and range of courses in relation to National and International best practices of the revised program,
- v. Provide feedback on relevance and appropriateness of the revised program with reference to current professional practices, labor market requirement, research in relevant field.
- vi. Review the number and allocation of courses in each level of the program according to NQF levels.
- vii. Review the mapping of courses on NQF level descriptors.
- viii. Comment on the availability of physical, human and any other learning resources serving the revised program.
- ix. Give feedback and recommendations on the quality of the revised program.

- 5.2.4 Program justification of need for change in the current program considers accreditation standards in the related field of study, requirements of professional bodies, compliance with regulatory bodies, market research, benchmarking, published national and international reports in related field, feedback on Exit Survey, staff, employer, advisory board, student evaluation on course and instructor, external and internal reviewer feedback on current program,

follow up feedback of external validator etc. and their reflection in the revised program, rationale of the revised program. Program review team shall prepare the Justification of need for Change Form and shall reflect the feedback from internal and external stakeholder, highlights of the reports or accreditation standards in proposing the changes in the current program and its implementation in the design and development of the revised program.

5.2.5 *Criteria for selecting External Reviewer*

The candidate shall:

- i. have specialized subject knowledge in program area under review.
- ii. possess appropriate academic experience in the concerned discipline of the program.
- iii. have exposure to industry or labor market needs within the domains of the program under review.
- iv. have sufficient knowledge of the requirements of the program Accreditation Bodies at National and International level.
- v. have awareness of recent practices in program design and development.
- vi. be familiar with quality assurance practices and maintenance of academic standards at national and international level.
- vii. not have any conflict of interest with the University (at organizational level, staff, and student level).
- viii. be available and approachable at appropriate time and place or should be available virtually on a case-by-case basis.
- ix. possess diverse background and have work experience in similar accredited program in reputed higher education institutions across regions or countries.
- x. represent diverse backgrounds, academic and professional exposure to diverse regional and international accreditation bodies.
- xi. preferably have research publication in the area of program design, review, and development.

5.2.6 *Role of External Reviewer*

In order to ensure the relevance and quality of the revised program as per labor market needs, the following roles of External Reviewer have been identified:

- i. Review the documents related to current program namely, alignment with University Mission, Strategic Directions and Graduate Attributes, Compliance with regulations of Accreditation Bodies, Program Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs), Program Specifications, Course Specifications, Teaching and Learning Strategy, Assessment Design, Staffing, Availability of Resources, and Semester Report of HODs.
- ii. Prepare the feedback report on the quality of current program.
- iii. Review the Justification of Need for the revised program, Feedback from Internal and External Stakeholders, Benchmarking Report, Published National

and International reports in related program, Mapping of PILOs to staffing and Mapping of PILOs to facilities and resources.

- iv. Review the curriculum and range of courses in relation to National and International best practices for the revised program.
 - v. Provide feedback on relevance and appropriateness of the revised program with reference to current professional practices, labor market requirement, research in relevant field etc.
 - vi. Review the number and allocation of courses in each level of the program according to NQF levels.
 - vii. Review mapping of courses on NQF level descriptors.
 - viii. Comment on the availability of physical, human and any other learning resources serving the revised program.
 - ix. Give feedback and recommendations on the quality of the revised program once the initial feedback is implemented.
- 5.2.7 Program Coordinator shall contact 2 to 3 Internal Reviewers (academic staff within the domains of the program) with subject knowledge and industry experience at national and international level; and shall send relevant documents related to current program. Similarly, s/he shall send the relevant documents related to current program to 3 External Reviewers and invite one of them for site visit.
- 5.2.8 Internal Reviewers shall review all the program documents namely, Program Aim, Program Specifications, Course Structure, Intended Learning Outcomes, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods, Mapping of courses to NQF level and credit value performed by Mapping Panel, Admission Criteria, Learning Resource serving the current program, and Feedback from stakeholders.
- 5.2.9 Internal Reviewers shall review all Mapping related to Program, Courses and ILOs, Program Aims to University Mission, Program Graduate Attributes to University Graduate Attributes, PILOs to Program Aims, Teaching and Learning Methods, Assessment Strategies, Resources, and Staffing.
- 5.2.10 Internal Reviewer shall complete the evaluation form along with recommendations for the current program, following by sending to Program Leader/HOD.
- 5.2.11 External Reviewers shall review all the program documents namely, Program Aims, Program Specifications, Course Structure, Intended Learning Outcomes, Program Aims to University Mission, Program Graduate Attributes to University Graduate Attributes, PILOs to Program Aims, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods, Mapping of Courses to NQF level and credit value performed by Mapping Panel, Admission Criteria, Learning Resource serving the current program, Feedback from stakeholders etc.
- 5.2.12 External Reviewers shall review all the mapping related to Program, Courses, and ILOs, Program Aims to University Mission, Program Graduate Attributes

to University Graduate Attributes, PILOs to Program Aims, Teaching and Learning Methods, Assessment Strategies, Resources, and Staffing.

- 5.2.13 One of the 3 External Reviewers shall conduct a site visit and shall complete the evaluation form along with recommendations for the current program, following by sending to Program Coordinator/HOD.
- 5.2.14 Program leader shall implement the recommendations and shall provide feedback on External Review of the current program.
- 5.2.15 Department Council shall form a Review Team by December of the fifth year to elicit feedback from stakeholders and reflect on this feedback to identify strengths and weaknesses. This process shall include information, feedback, and analysis from the previous four/five years on:
 - Alumni Survey, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F02),
 - Employers Survey, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F03),
 - Course Evaluation Survey (GU-PR14PRD- F01),
 - Exit Survey (GU-PR07EXT-F01),
 - Benchmarking Report, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F04), and Justification of Needs for Change, (Form GU- PR14PRD-F05),
 - Feedback from Advisory Board,
 - Program Specifications, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F06) and Course Specifications, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F07),
 - Internal Reviewer Evaluation Form for Current Program, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F08),
 - External Reviewer Evaluation Form for Current Program, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F09),
 - External Reviewer Feedback on Implementation of Recommendations, (Form GU- PR14PRD-F12),
 - Semester/Annual Report of the Program,
 - Requirements of National and International Accreditation and Professional bodies,
 - Published National and International reports in related field of study.
- 5.2.16 Program Review Team shall propose major revisions in the program related to:
 - Revised program philosophy (Scope, or Rationale),
 - Revised program aims,
 - Revised program curriculum (including mandatory and elective courses, course domains, progression of courses),
 - Revised CILOs,
 - Revised Admission Criteria,
 - Development of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies.
- 5.2.17 Program Review Team shall review the mapping of courses to NQF level and credit value performed by Mapping Panel and shall ensure that at least 25 % of program courses at exit level are mapped to NQF level descriptors of the qualification. The following list of mapping related to program, courses and ILOs, teaching and learning methods, assessment strategies, resources, staffing shall be considered for review:
 - Alignment of Teaching, Learning & Assessment Philosophy, infrastructure, and staffing to PILOs,

- Mapping of Courses to PILOs,
- Mapping of CILOs to PILOs,
- Mapping of teaching and learning Methods to courses,
- Mapping of Assessment Methods to courses,
- Overall Mapping of Assessment Methods to CILOs (for each course),
- Mapping of components/criteria of each assessment method (Quiz Form, Assignment Form, Major Examinations Forms) to CILOs,
- Mapping of resources to courses,
- Mapping of staffing to courses,

In order to ensure consistency and alignment of the program with University Mission, Graduate Attributes, Standards of International Accreditation Bodies, the following mappings are done:

- Mapping of Program Aims to University Mission,
- Mapping of Program Graduate Attributes to University Graduate Attributes,
- Mapping of PILOs to Program aims,
- Mapping of PILOs to Standards of International Accreditation Bodies.

Additionally, Program Team shall propose enhancements of staffing, physical and learning recourses, and shall prepare improvement plan.

Program Team shall send all proposals and improvement plan to Internal and External Reviewers.

- 5.2.18 Internal Reviewers shall review the documents related to program justification of need for change, revised aim, program design, course structure, intended learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment methods, mapping of courses to NQF level and credit value done by mapping panel, all mapping forms related to program, courses, ILOs, aims and graduate attributes, teaching, learning and assessment methods etc., admission criteria, availability and planned physical and learning resources, send recommendations in the evaluation form (Form GU-PR14PRD-F10) to program leader which shall be further sent to Review Team.
- 5.2.19 External Reviewers shall review the documents related to program justification of need for change, revised aim, program design, course structure, intended learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment methods, mapping of courses to NQF level and credit value done by mapping panel, all mapping forms related to program, courses, ILOs, aims and graduate attributes, teaching, learning and assessment methods etc., admission criteria, availability and planned physical and learning resources, followed by sending External Reviewer Evaluation Form, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F11) to program leader/HOD, who shall send it to Review Team.
- 5.2.20 Review Team shall implement the recommendations and send the revised program documents to Department Council.
- 5.2.21 Department Council shall review and provide recommendations to C-PRDC for final comments.
- 5.2.22 C-PRDC shall finalize the program review documents and send to college council for further comments. CPRDC shall
 - Review the development process.

- Review the alignment with the University Vision, Mission, Core Values, Graduate Attributes, National and International standards. Alignment tables are:
 - Program Aims with University Mission.
 - Program Aims with University Graduate Attributes.
 - PILOs with Program aims.
 - Consider the university general and common courses with other programs offered by the College.
 - Review the program admission criteria in light of the university admission policy.
 - Collaborate with the Program Team to consider the remarks and recommendations to develop the revised program specifications.
- 5.2.23 College Council shall review the major revisions and send to U-PRDC.
- 5.2.24 U-PRDC: shall conduct final review of programs specifications, collaborate with C-PRDC for further enhancement and recommend for approval by the University Council.
- 5.2.25 University Council shall approve the program specifications and send to college for implementation.
- 5.2.26 College Dean shall collaborate with the relevant Head of Department to implement the revised program, shall facilitate, and provide the required staff, physical and learning resources, shall Inform the Unit of Admission & Registration for the new admission.
- 5.2.27 Department Council shall implement the revised program, shall oversee the annual review and feedback processes with program Team.
- 5.2.28 The process of annual and periodic review shall be same irrespective of the delivery mode of the program (hybrid/online/physical).
- 5.2.29 After one year of implementation, one of the 3 External Reviewers shall conduct a site visit and shall provide further feedback on implementation, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F12), and shall send to Program leader. Program leader shall fill the “Feedback on External Review” form, (Form GU-PR14PRD-F13).

6. Compliance

All above mentioned Teams, Committees and Councils shall ensure full compliance with the following HEC, BQA, and NQF regulations and standards, and relevant GU policies and procedures in relation to both annual and periodic reviews:

- a. For bachelor programs:
 - a bachelor programme consists of at least 120 Credit.
 - 14 and 7 teaching weeks are the minimum length of a regular and summer semesters, respectively.
 - Minimum and maximum loads of a full-time student are 10 and 20 Credit Hours in a regular semester, and 10 Credit Hours is the maximum load in a summer semester. Specific exceptions are applied in accordance with the relevant GU policies and procedures.
- b. For Master programs:
 - The minimum study period for the master’s degree is (1) calendar year and the maximum period is (3) calendar years.

- Students shall enroll in each of the semesters for no less than 9 credit hours and no more than 15 credit hours.
- c. For both bachelor and master programs:
 - Admission, student transfer, teaching staff, learning resources, physical resources, requirements for continuing the study and graduation are per HEC regulations and GU policies and procedures, as relevant.
 - Well defined and clear aims of the programme, which are aligned with the University mission and strategic goals.
 - Curriculum design ensures balance between theory and practice as well as balance between knowledge, skills, and competences.
 - Curriculum organization provides appropriate academic progression year on year within 8 semesters study plan that ensures courses prerequisite mechanism.
 - Curriculum and associated courses meet the standards and norms of discipline, which are determined by the relevant national and international accreditation and professional bodies.
 - Programme is designed/developed based on Intended Learning Outcomes, which are addressed in the programme and course specifications.
 - Programme courses are mapped to the PILOs.
 - Programme courses are mapped to the NQF Level Descriptors in accordance with the level of awarded degree.
 - Online program is revised following the regulations of HEC.
 - Internship programme is considered and included in the curriculum design with appropriate assessment mechanism.
 - Appropriate range of teaching and learning are outlined and aligned with the course types and levels.
 - Validity and reliability of assessment are ensured and consistently implemented to provide accurate, fair and transparent measurements of the learner's achievement of the learning outcomes.

7. Responsibilities

Faculty members are responsible for:

- Following this document appropriately.

Heads of Departments/program leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all faculty members and students are fully informed of this document.
- Ensuring that this document is appropriately implemented.

Deans are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all faculty members follow this document.
- Ensuring that this document is appropriately implemented.

C-PRDC and U-PRDC are responsible for:

- Appropriate implementation of this document.

Internal and External Reviewers are responsible for:

- Following and implementing these procedures appropriately.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for:

- Appropriate implementation of this document.

University Policy Development and Review Committee is responsible for:

- Systematic review of the effectiveness of this document.

8. Related Policies

- Assessment Policy
- Policy of Mapping Programs to National Qualifications Framework
- Program Review and Development Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- E-Learning and Distance Education Policy

9. Related Procedures

- Assessment Procedures
- Procedures of Mapping Programs to National Qualifications Framework
- Teaching and Learning Procedures
- E-Learning and Distance Education Procedures

10. Related References and Standards

BQA	Institutional Review Handbook
BQA	National Qualifications Framework Handbook
BQA	Programs-within-College Reviews Handbook
HEC	Academic Regulations and Resolutions