

YORK UNIVERSITY

Final Assessment Report – Executive Summary

EDUCATION

Faculty of Education

**Education, Undergraduate (BEd) and
Graduate Program (MEd, and PhD)**

Cyclical Program Review – 2011 to 2018

This Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the programs listed below.

Program(s) Reviewed:

BEd (Concurrent, including with Ryerson, and Consecutive)

BEd Tech

MEd

PhD

Graduate Diplomas

Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:

D. Gereluk, Dean and Professor, Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary

J. Hare, Professor and Associate Dean, Indigenous Education, University of British Columbia

N. Razack, Professor and Associate Dean, Global & Community Engagement, York University

Cyclical Program Review Key Milestones:

Cyclical Program Review launch: September 13, 2017

Self-study submitted to Vice-Provost Academic: February 1, 2019

Date of the Site Visit: April 24-25, 2019

Review Report received: July 8, 2019

Program Response received: August 23, 2019

Dean's Response received: September 18, 2019

Implementation Plan and FAR confirmed by Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance, November 2019

Submitted by Alice Pitt, Vice-Provost Academic, York University



This review was conducted under the York University Quality Assurance Protocol, August 2013.

SITE VISIT: April 24-25, 2019

The visit was organized around a set of interviews with multiple internal faculty stakeholder groups that included: Alice Pitt, Vice Provost Academic; Lyndon Martin, Dean of the Faculty of Education; Thomas Loebel, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies; Sarah Barrett, Associate Dean, Academic Programs; Laura Crane, Director of Academic Affairs & Operations; Qiang Zha, Graduate Program Director, and faculty members in a focus group meeting. In addition, the reviewers met with faculty members who teach in the Graduate Program in Education and those who teach in Undergraduate Education, the Undergraduate Program Director, the Associate Director Experiential Education, and the Manager of Student Services. The reviewers met with both graduate students in Education (YGSE), and undergraduate students and members of the undergraduate student association (FESA). The following were also consulted: Peggy Warren and Adam Taves, Associate Librarians and Adam Trent, Director, Information Technology Services and Education Resource Centre. An overview of off-site locations was provided that highlighted the Glendon, Wabean, Catholic Education Center.

OUTCOME:

The Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance received the Program and Decanal responses to the recommendations and has approved an implementation plan. The Faculty is to be commended on its progress on and on-going commitment to Indigenization. A top priority for the graduate program is revision of its learning outcomes. Plans for responding to recommendations are clear and implementation will enhance the quality of the programs and student experience.

A report on the progress of the initiatives undertaken in response to recommendations in general and as specified in the implementation plan will be provided in the Follow-up Report which will be due 18 months (May 2021) after the review of this report by the York University Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance.

The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2025 with a site visit expected in the Fall of 2026 or Winter of 2027.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND STRENGTHS:

The reviewers stated that “the Faculty of Education at York University is highly regarded locally, nationally and internationally. It continues to thrive despite political, labour, and financial constraints that have impacted programming. Overall, the Faculty has established an environment for teaching, research, and service to the community that is effective, collegial, and productive.” They also acknowledged that “the Strategic Plan of the Faculty of Education (2016-2021) outlines an ambitious set of directives and goals grounded in sound values of social justice and equity, innovation, deepening relationships, inclusivity and diversity, and sustainability.”

In considering the BEd the reviewers noted that “the intent to attract a diverse student

body with distinct pathways is reflective of the guiding principles in the Education Strategic Plan, and is evident in the ethos and culture of the faculty” and that “pathways offer a diverse demographic of students into the program. This is clearly its strength.” They further commented that “The faculty prides itself on its flexibility and diversity in the electives that they provide, and in the range of courses, and community engaged opportunities that are mandated for undergraduate students.”

In considering graduate programs, the reviewers noted “the structure of the graduate program is based on the interdisciplinary principles of literacy, teaching, culture. Given the non-departmentalized structure, the intent is for students to have a cross fertilization of ideas that go beyond disciplinary constructs that may hinder and constrict the ways in which education intersects across disciplinary divides.” They also commented the flexibility, which is key to realizing interdisciplinarity, also poses difficulties. Of particular note, faculty commented that there is a delicate balance between enhancing flexibility and responding to logistical issues that create challenges for running such a program. The reviewers further recognized that “there is a will and strong affiliation to the work that faculty do at the graduate level. Notably, the collegiality and appreciation for faculty intellectual freedom is one that was observed by the committee.”

About the program and curriculum, the report provided comments under the following headings: Overarching Aims and Purposes, Assessment, Community Engagement, Indigenous Education, External Pressures.

The reviewers urged the program to consider its interdisciplinary positioning, to enhance program coherence, and to continue to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls-to-Action including systematically developing Indigenous Education.

The Reviewers commented, “Building upon the strengths of its individual faculty members, students, and administrative leadership, the recommendations provided are intended to build capacity and elevate beyond the individual achievements by its members, toward a collective vision that resonates with the entire Faculty. Providing space to create collective ownership and responsibility for a collective vision and the principles that have been articulated, will help with future planning and sustainability at undergraduate and graduate levels.”

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The chart below lays out the implementation plan approved by the Joint Sub-Committee at its meeting in November 2019

	Recommendation	Action	Responsible for Follow-up	Timeline
1.	Establish a process to develop clearly articulated principles of interdisciplinarity and how these can be reflected in Education programs.	Graduate program to review and make recommendations for curriculum and/or marketing materials. The BEd is exempt from this recommendation	Associate Dean, Academic and Graduate Program Director	Revised graduate program learning outcomes with statement that documents the program's use of and expectations for the program's interdisciplinary nature to be submitted with the Follow-up Report in May 2021.
2.	Establish a process to enhance the cohesiveness of the undergraduate program and the coherence of multi-section courses.	Undergraduate program: establish communities of practice for BEd retreat. Graduate program: revisit graduate program learning outcomes and assessment, as well as mapping curriculum.	Associate Dean, Academic; UPD; GPD Note: support for review of graduate program learning outcomes will be provided through the Vice-Provost Academic, the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Teaching Commons	Report on progress in the Follow-up Report in June 2021 for UG program. Revised graduate program learning outcomes to be submitted with the Follow-up Report in May 2021
3.	Work to integrate, scaffold and embed Indigenous ways of knowing across undergraduate and graduate, including articulated plans and	Adopt a deliberate phased approach for the inclusion of indigenous perspective in common course courses; the establishment of Faculty-wide understandings; and the	Associate Dean, Academic; UPD; GPD; colleagues teaching in the programs.	Ongoing; phase one completed by 2021-2022. Report on progress and further plans in the Follow-up Report in May 2021.

	commitments. Indigenous community partnerships should be built and enhanced to support pathways to all programs.	deepening and broadening of the curriculum in this area.		
4.	Develop more online and blended courses to better respond to the diverse populations of students.	Continue to explore and support pedagogical innovation through both blended and fully online courses with an emphasis on fully online innovation. Develop evaluation to determine the extent to which formats improve student access.	Associate Dean, Academic	Report on the increase in numbers of blended or online courses that have been developed and the impact these courses have had on accessibility in the Follow-up Report due May 2021.
5.	Conceptualize and distinguish between Year 1 and Year 2 of the practicum experience	Year 1 students to participate in a Culminating Practicum Experience in 2019-20. Practicum Facilitators will have smaller groups in 2019 and an exit practicum meeting. Facilitators to focus on specific expectations of Year 1 and Year 2.	Associate Dean, Academic; UPD; EE Coordinator	Report on outcomes as part of the Follow-up Report in May 2021. The report should include commitment and/or revisions to practices based on experience.
6.	Establish mentoring initiatives for graduate students that are faculty-driven and ensure a more even experience among students, with attention being given to indigenous teacher candidate given the programming initiatives that	Peer-mentoring was begun in 2018-2019 and will continue. A graduate initiative will begin in 2019-2020. Continue to develop mentorship programs in partnership with York Graduate Students in Education and Indigenous Education Centre).	Associate Dean, Academic; GPD	Follow-up Report to include details on the number of participants and activities undertaken, due May 2021

	create a pathway to doctoral studies.			
7.	Establish formalized Faculty-level discussion forums to look at broader themes and substantive debates as they relate to programs, curriculum, scholarship, and workload/supervision, to foster deliberation, reinvigoration, and collective reflection and collaboration	Increase number and regularity of program focused retreats. Launch and evaluate collegial conversation series. Maintain other spaces for conversations.	Dean; Associate Dean, Academic; Associate Dean, Research; GPD; UPD	2019 and ongoing Follow-up Report to describe plans and events held along with comments on how such conversations have been or will be responded to.
8.	Increase alumni engagement to enhance, support, and extend the ways in which alumni can feel a lifelong affiliation and pride with the Faculty of Education.	Liaise with and support Education Alumni Network. Continue to seek new opportunities for alumni engagement.	Dean; Associate Dean, Academic; GPD	2019-2020 Report on activities in the Follow-up Report due May 2021.