
Final Assessment Report- Executive Summary

Business Administration

2015-2022

To: Algoma University Senate

From: Dr. Michele Piercey-Normore on behalf of the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

Date: March 2024

In accordance with the Algoma University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan provide a synthesis of the cyclical program review process (and related outcomes) of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program. The program review includes all Business Administration programs. These include: (1) Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours); (2) Bachelor of Arts (General) Accounting; (3) Certificate in Aviation; (4) Certificate in Business; (5) Certificate in Marketing Management; (6) Certificate in Accounting; (7) Certificate in the Business of ESports. This report identifies the strengths of the program, together with the opportunities for program improvement and enhancement. The report sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The report includes an Implementation Plan that identifies (a) what bodies are responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the Final Assessment Report, (b) what bodies are responsible for providing any resources made necessary by the recommendations, (c) any changes in the organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations, (d) what bodies are responsible for acting on those recommendations, and (e) the timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

Cyclical Program Review Summary for the Business Administration Program

The Bachelor of Business Administration Program submitted their self-study on August 30, 2022. Following a request for editing and completion of missing pieces, the final self study was re-submitted and approved by the Quality Assurance Committee in February 2023. The self-study included an analysis of program strengths and areas for improvement informed by quantitative data analysis, feedback from students, and an analysis of the program curriculum. Included were the CVs for full-time faculty, course outlines, and student survey results.

Two arm's length reviewers were selected by the Quality Assurance Committee of the Senate to conduct the external review. The reviewers (Dr. Jennifer Li, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs and Professor of Accounting, Brock University and Dr. Camillo Lento, Professor of Accounting, Lakehead University) were provided with a briefing package and conducted a virtual site visit on May 25-26 2023. The external reviewers met with faculty in the program, the members of the Self-Study Committee, the departmental and Faculty chairs, academic and administrative unit heads, including the VPAR, the Faculty Dean, the Associate Vice-President, Academic, the University Registrar, the Vice President Nyaagaaniid, Anishinaabe Initiatives, Equity and Student Success, the designate of the Director of Information Technology, the University Librarian and current students and alumni of the program.

The reviewers submitted the Reviewers' Report on the Business Administration program on June 26, 2023. In their report, the external reviewers provided feedback on each of the evaluative criteria in the IQAP. The objectives, admission standards, curriculum, teaching and assessment, and quality indicators were assessed for the programs under review.

The reviewers provided 14 recommendations for improvement of the Bachelor of Business Administration program.

The reviewers commended the institution for sharing its program mission, vision and Strategy plans and recommended that the BBA curriculum map be extended to formalize the alignment between the program learning outcomes, the mission of the program and the AU mission, Special Mission and academic plans (page 4, External Reviewers' report).

Below you will find a summary of the findings and recommendations.

Summary of Significant Program Strengths

- The Business Administration program has one of the highest levels of student demand at Algoma University
- The unique college transfer pathway offers a pathway to avoid the need for articulation agreements with individual colleges
- The reviewers commended the two new specializations in Aviation and ESports as being unique and a distinguishing feature of the program
- The ability for a student to complete a degree completely online

Summary of Recommendations

The reviewers made 14 recommendations throughout the document to which both the Department and the CAO responded on July 27, 2023 and September 2023, respectively.

The reviewers recommended that the BBA curriculum map be extended to formalize the alignment between the program learning outcomes, the mission of the program and the Algoma University mission, Special Mission and Academic Plans (pg. 5, External Reviewers' Report).

The reviewers commended the program for it being one of the most attractive programs the University offers, but noted a potential issue in terms of overlap between the BBA and its graduate certificate programs, recommending that certificate students and BBA students be enrolled in different sections, to account for potentially different learning skills of students (page 5, External Reviewers' report).

The broad college transfer pathways into the BBA program were praised by the two reviewers, as were the two new specializations in Aviation and eSports. While being recognized as unique, the reviewers questioned whether these programs will be successful in terms of attracting students in the Ontario market. Furthermore, the reviewers felt that the BBA program being continued to be offered online in the light of other universities contracting their online offerings post-pandemic was a distinguishing feature of the program (page 5, External Reviewers' report).

On page 6 of their report, the reviewers discussed the seven PLO-s and 39 elements of the curriculum map, recognizing the rather complex nature of the learning objectives picture of this program. It was felt that it would be optimal to refine the PLO-s to make them both more concise and measurable and provided some examples on how to accomplish this crucial exercise (page 6, External Reviewers' report).

The reviewers commended the accounting and human resources specializations being mapped on the CPA competency map and the CHRC designation, encouraging the program to attempt mapping the financing concentration to the CFA level one (page 7, External Reviewers' report).

The lack of institutional data was brought up in several instances, and the reviewers noted the limited ability to address some of the questions comprehensively (e.g. pages 8, 11 External Reviewers' report) as well as assisting the program and the institution themselves to understand how best to support program quality as well as student success.

It was felt that the program design and course offerings across all years of the program reflects the current state of the discipline. The reviewers noted that core courses included data analytics as well as a variety of soft skills, thereby contributing to the successful preparation of students for the workforce (page 8, External Reviewers' report). They supported expanding the co-op program and service and experiential learning opportunities in the program (pages 8, 10, 13, External Reviewers' report). The reviewers recommended that the program be made more transparent to interested and present students by developing easier-to-follow course mapping as well as better visualizing the structure of each specialization (page 8, External Reviewers' report). Furthermore, the reviewers emphasized more than once that core classes should be offered more often than only once a year (page 9, External Reviewers' report).

The reviewers discussed the overreliance on part-time faculty, emphasizing the need for more full-time hires (page 10, External Reviewers' report). In addition, it was noted that the talent to teach the two new specializations (Aviation and eSports) may be a challenge to find in a job market and that the Faculty need to develop plans to meet this logistic challenge (page 10, External Reviewers' report). Furthermore, the reviewers observed that more FT faculty would be welcome to deliver the program better (especially in Brampton) and found the fact that the university has recently approved several tenure track positions promising (pages 11, 12, External Reviewers' report)

The reviewers noted that students would benefit from receiving program schedules at the beginning of the programs for the sake of transparency and ease of keeping track of their degree progression. In addition, it was suggested that the faculty should provide academic advisors by program and campus (pages 10, 12, External Reviewers' report).

Program Quality Outcome

The Quality Assurance Committee of the Senate discussed the distinguishing features of the Business Administration programming described by both the Self-Study Committee and the Reviewers. The Quality Assurance Committee approved the Report on Program Quality as submitted by Dr. István Imre, Associate Vice-President, Academic, and rated the program as being **"2. Good quality with minor concerns-** QualCom has some concerns about the quality of the program. The recommendations for quality improvement need to be implemented in order to enhance the overall quality and viability of the program" on October 12, 2023.

The Business Administration program shall prepare a report of the status of the agreed-upon Implementation Plan 18 months following Senate approval of the Final Assessment Report. This report shall be submitted via the Office of the CAO to the Quality Assurance Committee for review. The date of the next Business Administration program review is 2028/29.

Implementation Plan

The Academic Planning and Priorities Committee were asked to review the Report on Program Quality and rank the recommendations at their October 2023 meeting. The Committee completed the prioritization practice and informed the Department on November 8, 2023. The Departmental and Faculty Chairs submitted the draft Implementation Plan to the Designate of CAO on January 31, 2024. The Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approved the draft Final Assessment Report and the Implementation Plan on June 26, 2024. Items in the chart below are ordered according to the ranking and priority level provided by APPCOM.

Rec. Nr.	Action Steps	Who is responsible?	What resources are required?	Timeline
2.	The faculty reduces their reliance on part-time instructors to support the program's quality (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14).	Faculty Dean and VPAR	Office space to house current and new faculty.	11 new hires have been approved. Completion of these hires is expected by the end of the 2024/25 academic year.
4.	Create different program codes and use priority registration to enrol certificate and BBA students into other sections of the same course to meet their learning styles and goals (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14).	Department Chair and University Registrar	There is a need to be able to work collaboratively with the AlgomaU recruiting department and the Registrar's office	September 2024
5.	Put in place a system to collect data on key performance measures (e.g., number of applicants, registrants, retention, and graduation rates) to support future decisions and continuously improve program quality (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14).	Department Chair, Office of Institutional Planning and University Registrar	A regular schedule for the provision of the required data by the Registrar's office. A new registrarial system capable of the required data collection	Summer 2024
6.	Develop direct measures of each Program Learning Outcome to collect data and assess whether each PLO is being met before graduation (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14).	Faculty Dean, Department Chair	Uninterrupted , dedicated time to get it done and coordinate with faculty to design an efficient and effective process to manage outcomes/ objectives aligned with our overall program goals. Support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the Quality Assurance Office	July 2024.
7.	Develop an easy-to-follow course mapping (sequencing) for each specialization so that students will be well aware of their progression through the program (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14).	Faculty Dean, Department Chair.	Uninterrupted, dedicated time to get it done Support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the	This action item is a component part of the process required to

			Quality Assurance Office	complete #6, above. July 2024.
8.	Have more student support around academic advising, focusing on program-specific academic advising (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14)	Faculty Dean and Vice-President, Nyaagaaniid, Anishinaabe Initiatives, Equity, and Student Success.	A more effective and efficient system to do faculty advising, with the integration of technology. 11 new faculty members are expected to be hired in 2024, which should reduce the advising workload for faculty and the wait time for students.	December 2024
9.	Faculty provide academic advisors by program and campus (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 10)	Faculty Dean	At least two faculty members (redundancy of Subject-matter-expertise) in each specialization on each campus (Brampton and Sault Ste Marie) is needed. The 11 new faculty hires should assist.	December 2024.
10.	Give academic advising the tools needed to provide more solutions to student issues. For example, courses could be offered more often to give students options when they fail a class (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 12)	Faculty Dean and University Registrar	Additional, dedicated, task-related Academic Support Staff support. Faculty will collaboratively design a process to support effective advising in concert with academic support staff.	July 31, 2024
11.	Revise the Competency Map to develop direct linkages between the Program Learning Outcomes and the key themes in the mission, special mission, strategic plan, SMA 2, and UUDLEs (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14).	Faculty Dean	Additional, dedicated, task-related Academic Support Staff support and SMA input, along with faculty coordination. This is a task of the BBA Curriculum Committee. Support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the Quality Assurance	July 31, 2024

			Office is required to complete this task.	
12.	Refine the Program Learning Outcomes so that they are more concise and measurable (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14).	Faculty Dean and Department Chair	Additional, dedicated, task-related Academic Support Staff support and SME input. This task will be completed by the BBA Curriculum committee. Support is required from the Centre for Teaching and Learning and Quality Assurance Office.	July 31, 2024
13.	The University provides online delivery policies covering different aspects of online courses, focusing on ensuring the academic integrity of each course assessment (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14).	Faculty Dean	There needs to be a collaborative approach to dealing with this issue, which university administration needs to adopt.	September 2025
14.	Continue building more experiential learning opportunities into the BBA program in the future (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14)	Faculty Dean and Department Chair	More close collaboration with the similar university-level WIL committees, and dedicated faculty and staff time move forward this initiative. Develop a process for course evaluation and improvement with SME? and Exit surveys.	July 2024

Items from the Implementation Plan that were completed Prior to the Submission of this Report

Rec. No.	Action Steps	Who is responsible?	What resources are required?	Timeline
1.	Formalize the course coordinator role, and appoint a course coordinator for all core courses with multiple sections to warrant consistent course content and assessments, enhancing the program quality (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14).	Faculty Dean	Both the AlgomaU Administration and faculty Union have agreed to course coordinator positions. Each course coordinator position will require remuneration. The	A pilot project has been approved for use in W24.

			amounts for which are negotiated through the Collective Bargaining process. The start date will depend on the completion of the collective bargaining process currently underway.	
3	Offer at least one online section in a different semester to provide students flexibility (BBA External Reviewers' Report, page 14)	Department Chair	The maintenance and updating of at least a three-year rolling roster spreadsheet by Department Chairs	This is already being done.
