



Executive Summary and Implementation Plan  
Quality Assurance - Cyclical Program Review  
Faculty of Business Administration - Master of Business Administration  
(MBA)

September 2018

In accordance with the Lakehead University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) and the Ontario Quality Assurance Framework (QAF), the Graduate Coordinator for this program submitted a self-study (July 2016). Volume 1 presented the program descriptions and outcomes, an analytical assessment of the program and program metrics including results from a student survey along with institutional information and statistical data. Volumes 2 and 3, respectively, provided a collection of the program course outlines and the CV's for each full-time faculty member with teaching responsibility in the program.

Two external reviewers and one internal reviewer, selected by the Senate Academic Quality Assurance Sub-committee (SAC-QA) from a set of proposed reviewers, examined the materials and completed a two-day site visit in August 2016. The site visit included meetings with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Deputy Provost, Vice-President (Research and Innovation), Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration, current and past Graduate Coordinators for the program, five members of the FOBA Graduate Studies Committee, Administrative Assistant for FOBA, Administrative Analyst for Graduate Studies and AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business), nine members of the MBA teaching faculty, the University Librarian, eight current MBA students including four international students and one part-time student, and four MBA alumni.

The Review Team toured several key spaces on the Thunder Bay campus including:

- a. in the ATAC building, the Telepresence room (creating a virtual classroom between the Thunder Bay and Orillia campuses), often used for the MBA program;
- b. in the Ryan Building, a tour of the classroom and faculty administrative space, and
- c. a tour of the Chancellor Paterson Library focusing on existing group meeting rooms and space currently under renovation for group meetings.

In their report (October 2016), the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the MBA program meets the Quality Assurance Framework evaluation criteria and is consistent with the Faculty's own mission statement as well as the University's mission, academic plan and strategic plan providing evidence that the program aligns with the four priorities of sustainability, comprehensiveness, research and diversity.

The curriculum structure and delivery, teaching and assessment methods are appropriate and consistent with those of most other MBA programs. The program reflects the current state of the discipline, and is effective in preparing graduates to meet defined program outcomes; the MBA learning outcomes align with the University's Graduate Degree Level Expectations.

The Review Team summarized the many strengths of the MBA program as follows:

"The successful accomplishment of AACSB accreditation in November 2015 reflects an international evaluation of the quality of the MBA program, and the commitment of [the Faculty] to continuous quality improvement."

"... there is strong evidence that the MBA program is contributing to the economic development of the local, regional and broader community ... demonstrating a strong consistency with the University's strategic plan."

"Community engagement and outreach is evident in the MBA program through the collaboration with industries such as Bombardier, small local businesses, and the Northwestern Ontario mining industry"

"... results from the Assurance of Learning (AOL) tests confirm that students are successfully achieving program and Graduate Degree Level Expectations."

The Review Team identified areas for improvement through recommendations including:

1. a thorough review of the Business Skills Development Program,
2. the development of a plan to support and integrate international students into the program,
3. a review of the space needs of the program,
4. a restructuring of the Strategy Project course so that it functions as a capstone, and
5. a review of course syllabi to ensure consistency in the presentation of learning outcomes and their linkages to program objectives.

The Graduate Coordinator, the Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration and the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies submitted responses to the Review Team Report (May 2018). Clarifications and corrections were presented followed by a response to each of the recommendations made by the Review Team.

A Final Assessment Report (FAR) has been prepared to provide a synthesis of the external evaluation and internal response to the recommendations. This report

identifies the significant strengths of the program, the opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The Implementation Plan identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the FAR; who will be responsible for providing any resources made necessary by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations; who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

## Implementation Plan (Part A): Program Responsibilities

| Recommendations                            | Proposed Follow-up   | Responsibility  | Timeline                       |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Business Skills Development Program</b> | Analysis of student performance in the program and on a common exit exam to monitor and improve the BSDP as an avenue for admission; provide report to Dean FOBA.  | Graduate Coordinator*, Faculty members                                      | Fall 2016; with annual updates |
| <b>International Student Support</b>       | Develop a proposal for better supporting international students in the program; provide report to Dean FOBA.   | Graduate Coordinator*, Faculty members, Vice-Provost Lakehead International | Fall 2017; with annual updates |
| <b>Space Requirements</b>                  | Develop a proposal to clarify space needs of the program and MBA students; Explore opportunities with Administration; provide report to Dean FOBA.   | Graduate Coordinator*, Faculty members                                      | Summer 2018                    |
| <b>Program Continuous Improvement</b>      | As part of ongoing program review and assessment, consider timetables, scheduling of courses, and alignment of course outlines with Program Learning Outcomes as well as Assurance of Learning protocols. Provide report to Dean FOBA. | Graduate Coordinator*, Faculty Members, Office of the Registrar             | Fall 2017; with annual updates |

## Implementation Plan (Part B): Decanal & Administration Responsibilities

| Recommendation   | Proposed Follow-up  | Responsibility   | Timeline                                |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Respond to reports prepared regarding Recommendations</b> | Identify and pursue additional opportunities and/or requirements for consultation and collaboration with other Academic and Administrative units. | Dean FOBA*,<br>Dean Graduate Studies,<br>Vice-Provost Lakehead International | Within 6 months of receipt              |
| <b>Report progress on Recommendations to the Provost</b>     | Provide details on progress towards addressing the Recommendations and plans for next steps.  | Dean FOBA*   | As part of Annual Reporting Opportunity |

\* identifies the individual with Lead responsibility