

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Under Nipissing University's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) and the Ontario Universities Quality Assurance Framework (QAF), all programs are subject to a comprehensive review at least/at minimum every eight years to ensure that they continue to meet provincial quality assurance requirements and to support their ongoing rigour and coherence. This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on June 29, 2023 and ratified by the Quality Council on May 5, 2023

In academic years 2022-23 a program review was scheduled for Bachelor of Science - Biology and Bachelor of Science - Environmental Biology and Technology. This was the 2nd program review for this program. The timeline of the review was as follows.

PROGRAM UNDER REVIEW

PROGRAM	SENATE APPROVAL DATE	PREPARED BY
Bachelor of Science – Biology Bachelor of Science – Environmental Biology and Technology	October 13, 2023	Provost and Vice-President

A. REVIEW TIMELINE

SELF-STUDY REVIEW TIMELINE	DATE
1. Self-Study Presented to AQAPC	April 22, 2022
2. Site Visit Conducted	April 17-19, 2023 (Virtually)
3. Reviewer's Report Received	April 27, 2023
4. Department's Response Received	July 6, 2023
5. Dean's Response Received	July 6, 2023

A. REVIEW SUMMARY

Two external reviewers conducted the review. During the in-person site visit, the reviewers met with the following groups and individuals:

Provost and Vice President, Academic

Dean of Arts and Science

Internal Review Committee

Librarian

Current Students

Biology and Chemistry Department Faculty

The academic programs offered by the Department which were examined as part of the review included:

- BSc Biology
- BSc Environmental Biology and Technology

The following program strengths were noted:

Nipissing University's Biology and Chemistry Department delivers a strong undergraduate education, combining core scientific knowledge with hands-on lab and field work, and encourages students to engage actively in their communities at all levels.

Summary of review team recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive plan for faculty and technologist renewal, including hiring tenure-track and full-time instructors to replace recent losses and support future curriculum and program proposals.
- Coordinate with Dean and Provost offices to secure appropriate budget and staffing, including a faculty member for the Nursing program housed within Biology & Chemistry.
- Conduct a thorough departmental curriculum review, remove outdated courses, update a three-year course plan annually, and enhance upper-year courses with labs.
- Reconsider the proposed biomedical sciences program due to resource constraints; consider developing a One Health program leveraging existing departmental strengths.
- Increase course diversity by cross-listing relevant courses from other departments and joining the Ontario Universities Program in Field Biology (OUPFB).
- Reassess the potential merger of Biology & Chemistry and Geography departments to ensure it does not negatively impact student recruitment and departmental strength.
- Address student retention by introducing annual surveys, tracking academic progress, and involving student advisors and representatives in departmental meetings.
- Seek diverse research funding sources and negotiate workload recognition for research activity to foster a stronger departmental research culture.

Status:

Due date for 2 Year Follow-up Report: 2025

Date of next Cyclical Review: 2029

B. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Below are the recommendations that require specific action as a result of the Review, along with the identification of the position or unit responsible for the action in question. Notwithstanding the position or unit identified as being responsible for specific recommendations, the Dean of the Faculty has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the recommended actions are undertaken

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSIBLE MEMBER/UNIT	PROJECTED COMPLETION
Recommendation #3: Urgent curriculum review will have implications for other recommendations especially #2, 4 and 5.	Chair and Dean	December 1, 2023
Recommendation #7: Review of retention concerns; this information should inform curriculum review and any other recommendations about program design and budget model.	Chair and Dean	November 1, 2023