A second cycle for continuous improvement of the quality of college education

Commission d'évaluation
de l'enseignement collégial

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS IN QUÉBEC COLLEGES

Guidelines, framework, and self-evaluation guide
Preliminary version

Québec

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Forward

This document is a preliminary version of the guidelines, framework, and self-evaluation guide for the second cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC). It is divided into two parts: the first part presents the guidelines and terms of reference; the second presents the self-evaluation guide. This version will be used by colleges participating in the first waves of the second cycle. A validation of the proposed approach and tools will be carried out throughout this process. Adjustments will be made and corrections may be added to this document in a final version in 2021, to take the colleges' comments into account.

FIRST PART
GUIDELINES AND FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Since its creation in 1993, the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial (CEEC) has worked to increase its expertise and that of the colleges in order to foster the development of an institutional culture of evaluation.

In 2013, the Commission introduced a new evaluation approach that resulted in a significant change in the way it fulfills its mandate and in the way colleges assume their responsibilities in this area. This new evaluation approach changed the Commission's perspective. Rather than directly examining the quality and implementation of programs of study and the effectiveness of policies and plans as it did previously, the Commission now evaluates the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC). That is, it focuses on the effectiveness of the mechanisms that are put in place to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of college education. This new, more comprehensive, and systemic approach also introduces another change to the Commission's evaluation undertakings since it is cyclical in nature, i.e., this focus on the effectiveness of the mechanisms will return at regular intervals.

The general framework of this evaluation approach reflected the Commission's desire to develop its practices in order to recognize the evaluation expertise developed by the colleges and to set up an evaluation undertaking of quality assurance systems that compares with the best practices in higher education elsewhere in the world. In this respect, in autumn 2016, the Commission obtained an official recognition of the compliance of its practices with major international standards for quality assurance in higher education. This certification was awarded by the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

The first cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance (SAQC) began in the fall of 2014 and is scheduled to end in 2020, i.e., a period of six years. The Commission is now entering a second cycle, the main purpose of which remains the continuous improvement of the quality of college education and which is a continuation of the first cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC).

One of basic principles of this Commission undertaking is that it should have benefits for all actors in the system, especially students. It needs to identify areas for improvement and actions that could improve the quality of college education.

The first cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC) invited colleges to describe their mechanisms, evaluate their effectiveness, and demonstrate their ability to review them. This second cycle mainly requires colleges to carry out a critical analysis of all their mechanisms, for each component, by criterion, and for their entire quality assurance system. The Commission invites them

to proceed in a comprehensive manner for each component, taking into account the interrelationships between the mechanisms. Subsequently, colleges will be required to take a critical look at all the components of their quality assurance system and develop an action plan for the continuous improvement of their practices.

Since the beginning of the first cycle, the Commission has paid particular attention to the colleges' comments made during the annual reviews and at meetings of the liaison committee made up of representatives of cegeps, subsidized private colleges, and non-subsidized private colleges. As a result, it made several adjustments to the audit process.

Moreover, in the fall of 2016, as part of joint work carried out by the Commission and the liaison committee, it was agreed to set up an advisory committee to assist the Commission in drawing up the guidelines and framework for the second cycle in order to provide continuity with the first cycle and to ensure that the audit process is streamlined.

Struck in the fall of 2017, this committee carried out its activities during 2018. It was composed of 22 people representing the different types of institutions (executives, teachers, professionals from cegeps and from subsidized and non-subsidized private colleges), evaluation experts (including one person from the university system), a student, the commissioners, the Commission's secretary general, and the coordinator in charge of the undertaking. Its mandate was to contribute to the Commission's reflection on a vision for the development of quality assurance and to work with it to identify the guidelines for the second cycle.

The comments of this committee were in line with those of the liaison committee, namely that the second cycle must build on the achievements of the first one and that it must ensure continuity using the same criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of the mechanisms of the same components of the colleges' quality assurance systems.

The Commission agrees with this view. The framework for the second cycle is therefore based on the same conceptual foundations as for the first cycle, but with adjustments and clarifications. Essentially, it presents the objectives of the second cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC) by specifying the elements of continuity, the prospects for streamlining the audit process, and the evaluation points of reference and criteria.

This document is divided into two parts. The first part presents the guidelines and framework and is composed of eight sections. The first section outlines the mandate and powers of the Commission. The second briefly discusses the conceptual framework of the first cycle and provides some clarifications. The third presents the main findings of the first cycle, which will end in 2020. The fourth sets out the objectives of the second cycle for the Commission and for the colleges. The fifth presents the evaluation

points of reference of the quality assurance system and the evaluation criteria for the components. The sixth describes the audit process. The seventh provides the Commission's documentation, reflection and public account.

The second part of the document is the Guide to self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the quality assurance system. The Commission proposes this guide to support colleges in carrying out their self-evaluation process. It focuses on the process to be carried out as part of the second audit cycle and was designed with a view to supporting staff involved in their institution's self-evaluation process. The guide is divided into seven sections. The first presents the self-evaluation process of the second audit cycle. The second describes the self-evaluation proposal and the data collection process. Each of the other five sections presents one of the five steps of the approach proposed to colleges for conducting the second audit cycle: 1) an updated portrait of the main characteristics of the college; 2) a review of the first audit cycle; 3) an analysis of the effectiveness of the mechanisms for each component; 4) a general conclusion on the overall quality assurance system and the challenges for the next audit cycle; and 5) the college action plan.

Appendices complete the document.

The Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial

Created in 1993, the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial* is an independent public quality assurance organization whose mission is to contribute to and demonstrate the development of the quality of college education (CEEC, 2018).

The Commission's mission covers all college-level institutions governed by the *College Education Regulations* (RREC). Currently this comprises a network of 116 institutions:[1]

- 48 general and vocational colleges (cegeps);
- 21 subsidized private colleges;
- 43 non-subsidized private institutions;
- 4 institutions under the authority of a ministry or a university.

As mandated by law, the primary function of the Commission is to evaluate the following elements for each institution:[2]

- institutional policies on the evaluation of student achievement, including procedures for the certification of studies, and their implementation.
- institutional policies on program evaluation and their implementation.
- implementation of programs of study authorized by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur taking into account the objectives and standards assigned to them.
- objectives, standards, and implementation of programs of study established by the institution, taking into account the needs that these programs are designed to meet.

In 2002, the scope of the Commission's mandate was modified to include, for cegeps and subsidized private colleges, the evaluation of:

- activities related to their educational mission regarding administrative and academic planning and management as well as instruction and support services; for cegeps this includes an evaluation of their strategic plans.

1. Campuses, constituent colleges, and college centres are not included here. This reflects the situation as of December 12, 2018.
2. The mission and powers of the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial are primarily established in sections 13 to 19 of the Act respecting the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial.

Furthermore, the Commission has been granted three major powers through legislation: the power to verify, the power to make recommendations, and declaratory powers to make its work publicly available. Operating with a considerable degree of autonomy, the Commission can as a result collect from institutions any relevant information required to do its work, set forth recommendations on actions to improve quality in a specific area, and make its evaluation reports publicly available. For their part, colleges are required to report on any follow-up actions undertaken to address the Commission's recommendations. The Commission may also make recommendations to the Minister of Education, Higher Learning and Research.

In the context of the undertakings carried out by the Commission since 1993, institutions in the Québec college system have developed mechanisms to ensure quality in both their programs of study and their delivery as well as in the evaluation of student achievement. They have also begun to measure, in the ongoing pursuit of quality assurance, the effectiveness of these mechanisms themselves. In addition, as part of their responsibilities, cegeps have adopted institutional strategic plans, including success plans, and reviewed the effectiveness of mechanisms that ensure quality management in executing these plans. Subsidized private colleges have also taken similar steps regarding success plans.[3]

3. As stipulated in Schedule 039 of the *Régime budgétaire et financier des établissements privés d'ordre collégial,* private institutions that submit their success plan to the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche and to the Commission, receive funding allocated for the implementation of this plan.

Review of the concepts

This section discusses some of the key concepts of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC) presented in the first cycle framework. The Commission wishes to clarify the following concepts: quality assurance, audit, quality assurance system, information systems, and mechanisms.

For the first cycle of the undertaking, the Commission carried out a literature review on quality assurance at the international level, appending in its framework a bibliography outlining the main references consulted. In this document, the bibliography has been updated. In addition, the Commission refers the reader to the results of its quality assurance monitoring, which are published on its website. This strategic monitoring helps to keep its quality assurance expertise up to date and to gather input for its reflections in support of decision-making in the development and monitoring of its operations.

Quality assurance

Quality assurance is a term with several meanings. In general, it refers to all processes that ensure the quality of programs, institutions, or a national education system (CSE, 2012). According to Martin and Stella in a UNESCO literature review, "quality assurance is a generic term that encompasses all forms of monitoring, evaluation or external quality review and can be defined as a process to build stakeholder confidence that the offer (resources, processes and results) meets expectations or meets minimum requirements" (Martin and Stella, 2007, p. 37).

The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, in an opinion at the request of the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports on quality assurance in university education (CSE, 2012), stated that the concept of quality assurance, although not the subject of consensus, has been widely used in higher education since the early 1990s. The Conseil stressed that certain aims should be privileged and considered by the concept of quality assurance, including: "the improvement of the student experience (...) and the visibility of quality" (CSE, 2012, p.24).

For the Commission, quality assurance is defined as a process of continuous improvement based on the mechanisms that a college puts in place to verify the quality of its programs of study, to monitor the quality of the evaluation of student achievement, to guide its institutional development activities, and to examine the effectiveness of its systems for improving student success. These are mechanisms internal to an institution. Quality assurance is indeed, in the first instance, all the internal mechanisms set up by a college to ensure the quality of the education it offers. In a second step, for a number of countries or states, there is also an external perspective provided by an independent observer or peers on the quality of an educational institution's activities.

Based on a literature review and the monitoring of quality assurance, the Commission has identified the following main principles:

- Quality assurance emphasizes the assumption of responsibility by colleges and the improvement of processes within an agreed and congruent framework;
- Quality assurance takes into account the specific characteristics of a given institution, its values, and the objectives it pursues; it does not aim at standardization;
- Quality assurance refers to all the processes and mechanisms that make up the quality assurance system and ensure continuous improvement in the quality of college education.

The evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC) marked a significant change in the Commission's approach. As a result, the Commission continued to carry out its mandate in the context of a systemic and cyclical assessment of the colleges' internal quality assurance responsibilities. In order to take into account the specificities of the institutions, it has ensured that the implementation of this exercise is adapted to the realities of each institution. In short, the Commission has developed its own practices and processes based on the evaluation expertise developed by the colleges.

This evaluation approach has led colleges to base their actions on institutional quality evaluation practices in order to take a critical look at the effectiveness of their quality assurance mechanisms. In this sense, they have had to consider whether the mechanisms they implement help them to achieve the institutional objectives for which they were designed and whether necessary actions are taken to ensure continuous quality improvement.

Audit

The Commission based its first cycle of evaluation on the audit process. The definition of the audit is based on the evolution of evaluation practices and Commission's review of existing quality assurance processes at the international level. This definition is adapted to the specific context of Québec college education.

In brief, auditing, which some authors (Martin and Stella, 2007; L'Écuyer, 2011) call quality audit or quality audit in the context of quality assurance, is an approach that aims to evaluate, not quality or performance as such, but the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms. The audit is used to assess the strengths and areas for improvement of quality assurance mechanisms adopted by institutions to monitor and improve their activities.

The Commission is in fact assessing whether all the mechanisms declared by the colleges are being implemented and are proving effective. The second cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of the college quality assurance systems (SAQC) continues to use this approach to evaluate the effectiveness of Quebec college quality assurance systems.

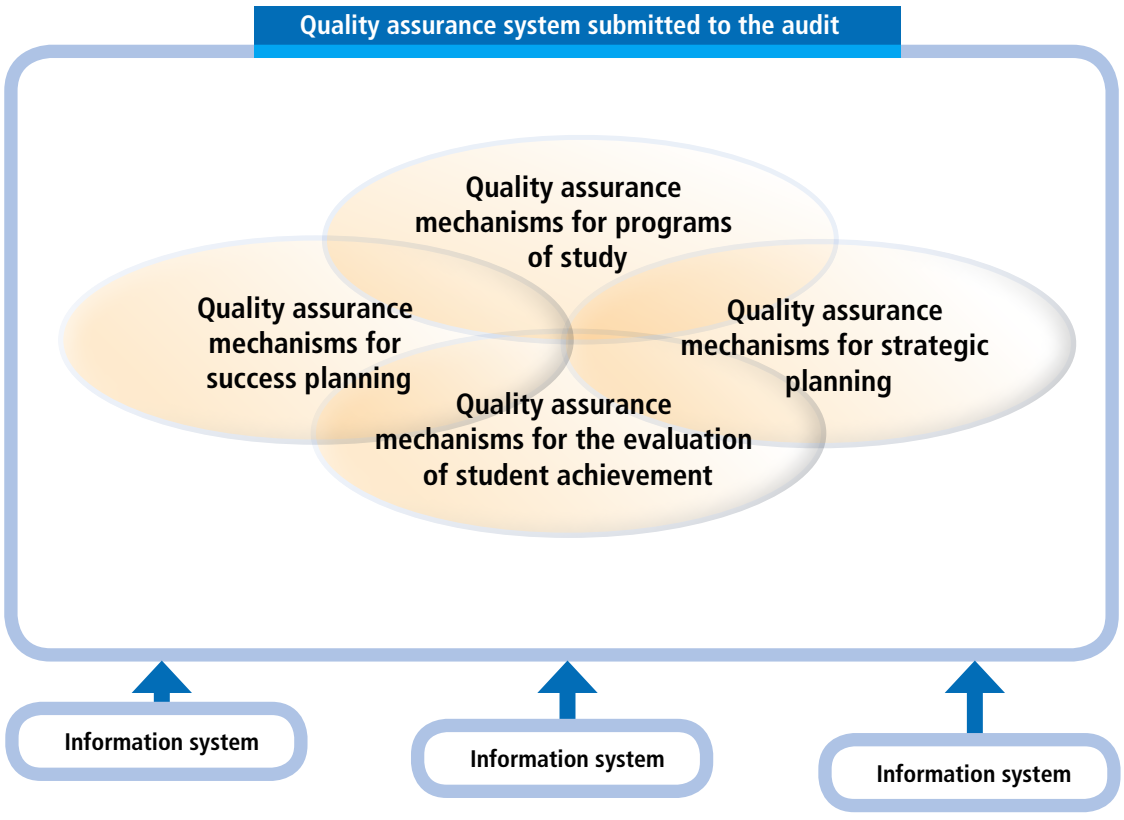
Quality assurance system

It is important to note here that a system is a coordinated set of institutional mechanisms and practices organized in a dynamic and structured manner. Within the framework of the first audit cycle, the Commission determined that a college's quality assurance system is composed of all the mechanisms ensuring quality for:

- programs of study;
- evaluation of student achievement;
- strategic planning;
- success planning.

In addition, the quality assurance system is based on institutional information that can be organized in one or more information systems required for monitoring the implementation of the mechanisms and their effectiveness.

Figure 1 :
Quality assurance system components submitted to the audit



Quality assurance mechanisms

For the Commission, a mechanism is both binding and guiding from an institutional perspective. It can take the form of policies, plans, by-laws, or established and documented practices.

An institution's quality assurance mechanisms are numerous and cover different aspects associated with its mission. A mechanism refers to a process or set of processes; it is a sequence of actions designed to perform an operation. The approval of course outlines can be an example: it is in fact a process to guide the development, verification, and adoption of course outlines. Processes or mechanisms are often accompanied by tools that have been produced for a particular function such as a checklist of what a course outline should contain.

The Commission specifies three general categories of quality assurance mechanisms that colleges are called upon to demonstrate:

1) institutional mechanisms governed by regulations related to the Commission's mandate:
   - Institutional Policy for the Evaluation of Academic Programs (IPEP)[4];
   - Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement (IPESA);
   - Strategic Plan;
   - Success Plan;
2) other institutional mechanisms, such as policies, programs, by-laws, etc.;
3) institutional practices established to support a given policy or other institutional mechanism.

The components of the quality assurance system under audit depend on the status of each institution. The table below outlines these components. Mechanisms associated with the same components are examined during the second cycle.

4. In the case of a policy (e.g. IPEP) covering the entire cycle of managing program of study (development, establishment, implementation, evaluation, review), the Commission's analysis is limited to provisions concerning the evaluation of programs of study.

Table 1
Components by status of college

COMPONENTS OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS		Status of institution			
		Cegep	Subsidized private college	Non-subsidized private college	Institution under the authority of a ministry or a university
Mechanisms to ensure:	The quality of programs of study	✓	✓	✓	✓
	The quality of the evaluation of student achievement	✓	✓	✓	✓
	The quality of strategic planning	✓			
	The quality of success planning	✓	✓		

Institutional information system(s)

An information system is an institutional management tool for the collection of the relevant data required to support decision making and ensure effective quality management.

It is up to each college to adapt the organization of its information system(s) according to its institutional practices so that the data contained therein are logically organized and easily accessible. As in the first audit cycle, information systems are not subject to a ruling by the Commission.

Findings of the first cycle

Since the initiation of the first cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC) in the fall of 2013, the Commission has collected feedback from the colleges on the functioning of the undertaking. Discussions involving members of the liaison committee, the advisory committee, and college system authorities made it possible to identify certain observations that guided development of the guidelines and the framework for the second cycle in continuity with the first cycle with a view to continuously improving the quality of college education.

In addition, the Commission has taken into account the observations of the annual progress report of audit visits published by the Commission in each of the years of the cycle.[5] These reviews are divided into two parts: the first part presents highlights from the analysis of the Commission's evaluation reports. The second takes a critical look at the audit process and stems from the results of the consultation forms sent to college stakeholders and experts after each audit visit. At the time of publication of this document, 52 colleges have been visited and 36 institutions are to be met by the end of the first cycle scheduled for 2020. In addition, 28 colleges were integrated into an exercise that is a prerequisite for the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC). This preliminary approach is intended for new college institutions or those that have not yet developed their quality assurance system.

Here is the Commission's summary of these main observations:

- The first cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC) allowed the colleges to describe the institutional mechanisms and their supporting practices to ensure the quality of programs of study, the quality of the evaluation of student achievement, the quality of strategic planning, and the quality of success planning;
- The implementation of institutional mechanisms is a strength of the colleges;
- Colleges have a rich perspective on their programs of study, based on a variety of evaluation tools that are effective in monitoring them;
- Practices for informing students with regard to the evaluation of student achievement are highlighted;
- The analysis of the links between the four components enabled an initial overall critical reflection on all practices implemented by the colleges.

5. Please visit the Commission website at http://www.ceec.gouv.qc.ca/evaluation-operations/quality-assurance/bilans-vf/

- The colleges found this exercise useful. It enabled them to mobilize their communities around a reflection on the effectiveness of the mechanisms put in place.

This first cycle also highlighted some challenges for colleges:

- The systematic review and updating of the main mechanisms in order to formally integrate new practices;
- In-depth analysis of the effectiveness of mechanisms in place;
- The development of an integrated vision of the components of the quality assurance system and their interactions.

Concerning the audit process, the colleges and experts that participated in one or more visiting committees have made a number of comments and suggestions since the beginning of the cycle to improve and facilitate the process. The Commission has also identified areas for improvement while providing a summary of its main observations and adjustments made during the first cycle:

- Maintaining flexibility in the management of the report and visit timetable;
- The importance of providing written feedback to colleges in the session following the visit;
- The need to clarify the Commission's expectations in the framework for the undertaking with the production of a second edition of the framework and the addition of a self-evaluation guide;
- The addition of practical and concrete exercises, which are also considered useful and relevant, during individualized training sessions;
- The addition of a follow-up meeting with colleges from the same round, one year before the submission of their self-evaluation report;
- The development of a workshop on the analysis of a self-evaluation report as part of the training of experts and the addition of a preparatory meeting with experts before the first day of the visit;
- The proposal of a template for the production of the self-evaluation report, the use of which remains optional;
- Continued support from the Commission for the logistical organization of the audit visit;
- A review of the questions to be asked during visits to better adapt them to the groups met.

The Commission notes from these observations that all the adjustments made to the approach and tools in the first cycle constitute progress in favour of streamlining the processes for colleges and wishes to extend the approach and tools to the second cycle. In addition, when the second cycle begins, the Commission must pay particular attention to the process by validating the approach and tools to ensure that expectations are clear and to make the necessary adjustments. It must also continue to provide training and support to colleges for the second cycle.

Based on the above observations, the Commission believes that it is necessary for colleges to continue to critically analyze all the mechanisms of the components and criteria that make up the college quality assurance system. This analysis should be undertaken because, the first cycle confirmed the relevance of evaluating the four components and their criteria and because the second cycle should help consolidate good practices and foster a better understanding of how the quality assurance system works from a perspective of continuous improvement.

The Commission also notes that most colleges have already identified the difficulties raised during their self-evaluation and have planned actions to make the necessary improvements to their mechanisms. During the first cycle, colleges were asked to develop an action plan to ensure that improvements were undertaken. In this second cycle, the action plan will be an important tool for continuous quality improvement and, as such, the Commission will integrate it as a step toward completing the second cycle and will assess the potential effectiveness of this action plan.

Objectives for the second cycle

As stated in the introduction, the second cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC) is an extension of the first. Taking into account its discussions with the advisory committee, the Commission has identified a number of objectives for itself and for the colleges.

The objectives of this second cycle for the Commission are as follows:

- contribute to the consolidation of institutional processes for continuous quality improvement;
- evaluate the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems from the perspective of continuous quality improvement;
- demonstrate the effectiveness of the mechanisms put in place in colleges to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of college education.

For colleges, the objectives are as follows:

- consolidate the mechanisms implemented in the first cycle and the systems they use to collect information on the components audited;
- consolidate the collaborative links between the different actors;
- strengthen their capacity to analyze the effectiveness of the mechanisms and to take charge of improvements to their mechanisms;
- further develop an integrated vision of the mechanisms and a common vision of responsibility delineation.

The Commission would like the colleges to carry out a more in-depth critical analysis of their mechanisms in this second cycle, based on what they have put in place and what they described in the first cycle, so as to explain the effective functioning of their mechanisms. To do so, colleges will be able to use the data and observations gleaned during the self-evaluation they conducted during the observation period, in particular, program evaluations, annual reviews, and policy implementation evaluations. The observation period extends from the end of the Commission's audit visit in the first audit cycle, to the submission of the College's self-evaluation report for the second audit cycle.

Elements of continuity

The second audit cycle includes several elements of continuity with the first cycle as well as some modifications. The Commission is maintaining the same perspective, namely an evaluation of the effectiveness of the various mechanisms. In addition, the

categories of mechanisms assessed are the same: institutional mechanisms linked with a regulatory obligation related to the Commission's mandate; other institutional mechanisms, such as policies, programs, and regulations; and institutional practices in support of a policy or other institutional mechanism. As regards the quality assurance system, the Commission is looking at the same components, namely mechanisms to ensure the quality of programs of study, mechanisms to ensure the quality of the evaluation of student achievement, mechanisms to ensure the quality of strategic planning, and mechanisms to ensure the quality of success planning. As in the first cycle, the number of components examined varies according to the status of the institutions in question.

The implementation of the mechanisms, their ability to ensure continuous quality improvement, and the review of these mechanisms are once again the central elements of the colleges' analysis. In this framework, the Commission will call them evaluation points of reference. In the second cycle, the focus is on the second evaluation points of reference, which leads the colleges to carry out a critical analysis of the effectiveness of all the mechanisms in relation to one another.

The following section presents the evaluation points of reference for each of the components and the associated evaluation criteria.

Also in line with the first audit cycle, the Commission will again provide a ruling for each component and an overall ruling for the entire quality assurance system of the college, using the same assessment scale. In addition, it will maintain the same audit process, which is based primarily on a college self-evaluation approach leading to the production of a self-evaluation report. The different phases of the audit process are presented from page 30 of this document.

To carry out their self-evaluation, the Commission is once again proposing to the colleges a process and a guide, which are described later in this document.

Perspectives for streamlining

In addition to ensuring that this second evaluation cycle is in line with the first, the Commission is concerned with streamlining the audit process by relying on the expertise developed by the colleges during the first cycle. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, maintaining the same approach, the same evaluation points of reference for the same components and the same criteria are, from the outset, likely to contribute to streamlining the process, because the procedures and concepts remain the same and are known to the colleges.

In addition, the analysis required of colleges is part of a more general perspective: the emphasis is on critical analysis of the effectiveness of all mechanisms, for each component, and by criterion.

To support the colleges in their approach and to facilitate the transition between the two cycles, the Commission will provide them with the data it has collected on their main characteristics and, where appropriate, the colleges will update this information. The Commission will also provide a summary table of the main observations of the first cycle evaluation report, including strengths, opinions issued, and rulings rendered. Colleges are invited to comment on this summary table in their second cycle self-evaluation report.

Finally, to guide colleges in the audit process, the Commission will continue to offer training and various templates to support the colleges in their approach. This training will include examples and case studies. In addition, more hands-on support may be offered to colleges, where appropriate, to guide them in their self-evaluation process.

Evaluation points of reference and criteria

In the audit, three evaluation points of reference are applied to each of the components of a quality assurance system in order to assess the effectiveness of the mechanisms used by the institution. The effectiveness of a mechanism resides in its ability to ensure continuous improvement in quality in reaching its stated objectives.

For each component, the three evaluation points of reference to be applied to judge effectiveness are the following:

1. The implementation of the mechanisms.
2. The ability of the mechanisms to ensure continuous quality improvement by:
   a) taking into account the aspects to be observed for each component criterion;
   b) identifying strengths and areas for improvement;
   c) taking charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement.
3. The review and updating of these mechanisms.

The following pages review the evaluation points of reference for each component and present the criteria associated with each. The aspects to be observed for each of the component criteria are found in the Self-Evaluation Guide in the second part of this document.

Table 2

Evaluation points of reference and criteria for evaluating quality assurance systems

	Quality assurance mechanisms for programs of study	Quality assurance mechanisms for the evaluation of student achievement
Evaluation points of reference	Evaluation criteria	Evaluation criteria
1. Implementation of mechanisms	**1.1 The quality assurance mechanisms for programs of study are implemented.**	**1.1 The quality assurance mechanisms for the evaluation of student achievement are implemented.**
2. Ability of the mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement	**2.1 Mechanisms to ensure the relevance of programs of study** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the relevance of programs of study because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement. **2.2 Mechanisms to ensure coherence of programs of study** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of program coherence because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement. **2.3 Mechanisms to ensure the suitability of teaching methods and student supervision and support** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the suitability of teaching methods and student supervision and support because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement. **2.4 Mechanisms to ensure the alignment of human, material, and financial resources with the education needs** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the alignment of resources with the needs of the programs of study because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement. **2.5 Mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of programs of study** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the effectiveness of program of study because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement. **2.6 Mechanisms to ensure the quality of management of programs of study** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the quality of management of programs of study because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement.	**2.1 Mechanisms to ensure a fair evaluation of student achievement** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the fairness of the evaluation of student achievement because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement. **2.2 Mechanisms to ensure an equitable evaluation of student achievement** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the equitable evaluation of student achievement because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement.
3. Review of mechanisms	**3.1 The mechanisms for ensuring the quality of programs of study are reviewed and, where necessary, modified to ensure their effectiveness.**	**3.1 The mechanisms for ensuring the quality of evaluation of student achievement are reviewed and, where necessary, modified to ensure their effectiveness.**

Evaluation points of reference and criteria for evaluating quality assurance systems (second part)

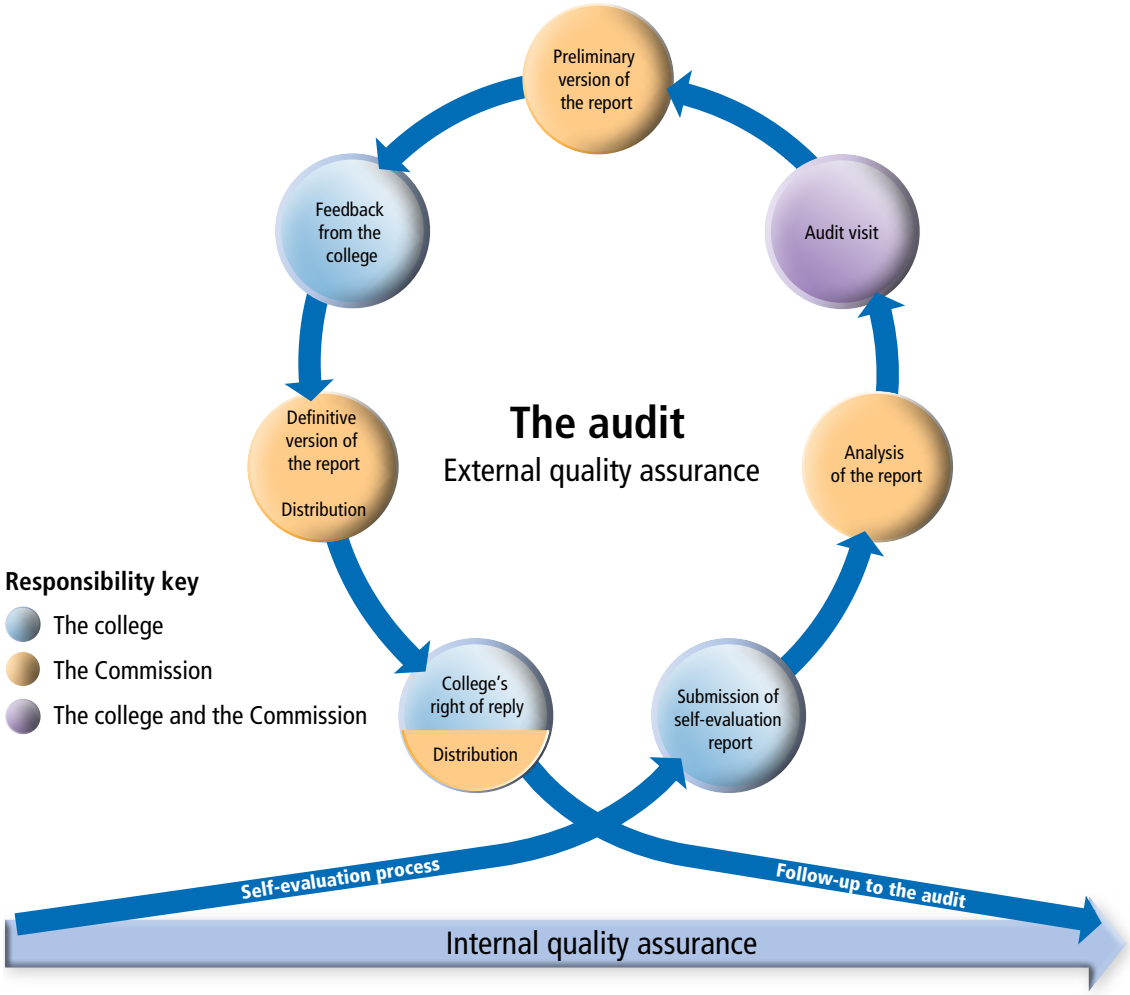
	Quality assurance mechanisms for programs of study	Quality assurance mechanisms for the evaluation of student achievement
Evaluation points of reference	Evaluation criteria	Evaluation criteria
1. Implementation of mechanisms	**1.1 Mechanisms to ensure the quality of strategic planning are implemented.**	**1.1 Mechanisms to ensure the quality of success planning are implemented.**
2. Ability of the mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement	**2.1 Mechanisms to ensure the implementation of strategic planning** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the implementation of strategic planning because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement. **2.2 Mechanisms to ensure follow-up of strategic planning results** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the follow-up of strategic planning because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement.	**2.1 Mechanisms to ensure the implementation of success planning** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the implementation of success planning because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement. **2.2 Mechanisms to ensure follow-up of success planning results** All the mechanisms ensure the continuous improvement of the follow-up of success planning because they make it possible to: (a) take into account the aspects to be observed; (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement; (c) take charge of improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement.
3. Review of mechanisms	**3.1 The mechanisms for ensuring the quality of strategic planning are reviewed and, where necessary, modified to ensure their effectiveness.**	**3.1 The mechanisms for ensuring the quality of success planning are reviewed and, where necessary, modified to ensure their effectiveness.**

Audit process

This section presents the audit process for the second cycle of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC).

The process of auditing an institution is comprised of several stages. These key moments are illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 2:
The audit process



Scheduling the audit

The Commission draws up a plan for audit visits at the beginning of the cycle and informs the colleges of the session selected for its visit. It subsequently communicates with each college to provide it with a timetable for the audit process and to agree on a date for the audit visit. The training and support offered to the college are included in this timetable.

College self-evaluation process

For this second evaluation cycle, the Commission again asks the colleges to assess the effectiveness of their quality assurance system, based on the evaluation components, evaluation points of reference, and criteria presented in section 5, and to demonstrate its effectiveness in a documented self-evaluation report[6].

To guide the college in carrying out its self-evaluation process, the Commission proposes five steps. Steps 1 and 2 provide a transition from the first to the second audit cycle, while steps 3, 4, and 5 form the second audit cycle itself.

In Step1, the college updates the portrait of its main characteristics, while in Step 2, it reviews its first audit cycle, particularly the findings contained in the evaluation report produced by the Commission and the main achievements of its action plan.

Step 3 focuses on analyzing the effectiveness of all mechanisms for each component by evaluation criteria. Before carrying out this critical analysis, the college will list the mechanisms it implements and briefly describe them. In Step 4, the college drafts a general conclusion on its overall quality assurance system and identifies challenges for the next audit cycle. Finally, in Step 5, the college develops its action plan based on the areas for improvement identified during its self-evaluation process.

Over the course of these five steps, the college is led to develop its self-evaluation report, which includes the action plan. The report is accompanied by appendices to support the college's demonstration. In addition, the Commission makes available to colleges a guide for the production of the self-evaluation report; this guide constitutes the second part of this document. Finally, the Commission will propose to the colleges a template for the presentation of the report.

Submission of the self-evaluation report

The college submits its self-evaluation report and appendices electronically on the Commission's digital portal according to the pre-arranged procedure.

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6. Details on the content of the self-evaluation report are provided in Appendix A.

Analysis of the self-evaluation report and preparation for the visit

The college's self-evaluation report is analyzed by the members of the visiting committee[7]. The results of the analysis are then forwarded by the experts to the Commission's research professional in preparation for the on-site visit. In order to help prepare the groups being met, the Commission provides the college with a preparation guide for the visit and discusses it with the college during a conference call.

On-site audit visit

The purpose of the on-site visit is to contextualize and complement the information contained in the self-evaluation report and to provide a better understanding of the college's conclusions. In addition to complementing the self-evaluation report, the visit enables consideration (where applicable) of any subsequent corrective measures implemented by the college in the interval between the adoption of the report and the time of the visit.

Typically, the visiting committee meets with the college administration, the board of governors, the Commission of Studies, college management, the pedagogical management team working with the director of studies, and the self-evaluation committee, as well as with teachers, students, professionals, and support staff. Two thematic meetings are also planned, one on student success, student support, and the evaluation of student achievement, and the other on programs of study. These meetings are adapted to the organizational structure of each college.

At the conclusion of these meetings, the visiting committee members meet to summarize and record their observations. They measure the results of the audit for each criterion, identify key areas of strength and those in need of improvement, render their rulings and, in certain cases, formulate opinions that the Commission could present to the institution in question. The committee's observations are evidence-based and supported by the observations found in the college's self-evaluation report, views expressed by college stakeholders during the visit, and any other documents examined while on site.

The on-site visit concludes with a meeting with the college administration, at which time the commissioner who chaired the committee, accompanied by the research professional, presents the committee's key observations based on each criterion and component examined.

7. Details on the composition of the visiting committee and the role of experts are provided in Appendix B.

Drafting, validating, and adopting the preliminary version of the audit report

The research professional drafts a preliminary version of the audit report, based on the conclusions and opinions noted by the visiting committee in its synthesis, and validates the content of the report with the commissioner in charge and the experts of the visiting committee. The preliminary report is then submitted to a committee of readers to ensure clarity and consistency of the text, and then examined, adjusted if required, and approved by the Commission.

College feedback on the preliminary audit report

The Commission forwards the preliminary version of the audit report to the college and invites the latter to comment on its opinions and rulings, and generally provide feedback on whether the report accurately reflects the situation of the college. The college is also invited to inform the Commission of any corrective measures adopted or carried out since the on-site visit.

Adoption of the final audit report by the Commission

The Commission then adopts the final version of the report. In some cases, the report may include the college's comments and its follow-up demonstrating any corrective measures adopted and carried out since the visit.

The final audit report is then sent to the college, forwarded to the Minister, and made public on the Commission's website.

College's right of reply

Upon receipt of the final audit report, the college may submit its feedback, within a maximum period of two months, by way of a letter from the Director General to the Commission. The comments made by the college in this letter must focus primarily on the conclusions of the audit report as well as the opinions and rulings issued therein. The Commission publishes the original and full version of the college's letter on its website.

Follow-up to the audit

If required, the college must submit an explanatory letter to the Commission by a deadline agreed upon by the Commission and the college, containing the follow-up actions undertaken on the recommendations. This letter must outline the mechanisms put in place by the college with respect to the recommendations. The college will accompany this letter with documents illustrating the implementation of the quality assurance mechanisms. The Commission evaluates the follow-up and produces a report, which is made public in the same manner as the final audit report.

Commission's documentation, reflection and public account

Throughout the undertaking, the Commission invites institutions to reflect on the challenges of continuously improving the quality of college education. In this way, it wishes to document the situation of the colleges and to share their difficulties and progress. This is presented in the annual progress reports as well as in the summary report it produces at the end of the undertaking. In addition, the Commission makes the results of its evaluations public by publishing the full text of each institution's evaluation reports on its website.

Annual audit visit progress report

For this evaluation exercise, the Commission carries out an annual review of the audit visits. This approach is intended to provide a critical assessment in order to make adjustments to the process or tools, if necessary, and to provide a portrait of the audit results in the colleges visited. The progress report, which is made public, incorporates comments received from the experts and colleges visited during the year.

Summary report on the audit cycle

At the end of the audit cycle, a comprehensive summary report is produced to present the outcomes for all the colleges visited. This report also provides an opportunity to take a critical look at the process and tools and, if necessary, to review the Commission's expectations for future audit cycles. Finally, the report, which is made public, can also provide perspectives for the development and continuous improvement of college education.

Commission's rulings and opinions on the effectiveness of the quality assurance system

At the end of its audit, the Commission renders a ruling on each of the components assessed, issues opinions, where applicable, and provides a comprehensive ruling on the effectiveness of the quality assurance system.

Commission's opinions

In its audit reports, the Commission highlights the strengths in institutional practices observed during the audit, and where applicable, it also makes comments and delivers opinions in regard to any element requiring improvement. Opinion and judgements can take the form of *invitations, suggestions*, or *recommendations*. Recommendations require a follow-up by the colleges, whereby they must demonstrate by a deadline agreed upon with the Commission, the improvements made to address the shortcomings identified by the audit.

Commission's rulings concerning the components

For each component, the Commission renders a ruling on the effectiveness of the quality assurance mechanisms implemented by the college. Based on the criteria applied and the elements examined, it judges whether the quality assurance mechanisms and their management *ensure, generally ensure, partly ensure, or do not ensure* continuous quality improvement (programs of study / evaluation of student achievement/ strategic planning / success planning).

Commission's ruling on the college action plan

The Commission also issues a ruling on the potential effectiveness of the college's action plan for the second cycle. In rendering its ruling, it takes into account the following two criteria:

- **Compliance**

  The action plan includes the expected elements: actions, a timetable for completion, and a delineation of responsibilities.

- **Coherence:**

  The actions are based on the findings and analyses carried out by the college and, consequently, there is an alignment between the actions planned and the areas for improvement identified.

The assessment scale used by the Commission to render its ruling is as follows: the action plan has a very high, high, medium high, or low potential for effectiveness.

Commission's overall ruling

At the end of the evaluation exercise, the Commission delivers an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the college's quality assurance system, basing its ruling on the effectiveness of each of the system's components. Thus, the Commission concludes whether the quality assurance system and its management ensure, generally ensure, partly ensure, or do not ensure continuous quality improvement.

The Commission's overall assessment is based on a multi-step process. First, the visiting committee (see Appendix B) analyzes the college's self-evaluation report. At the end of the visit, the committee assesses its observations using tools to compile the rulings and opinions issued for each component, taking into account the evaluation points of reference and criteria. Based on this assessment, the research professional, as secretary of the visiting committee, prepares a draft report. It is submitted for validation to the commissioner in charge of the visit and to the three experts of the visiting committee. The draft report is then sent to a three-member reading committee whose role are to ensure that the text of the reports is aligned with the expectations set by the Commission and to contribute to the clarity and consistency of the reports.

Finally, at a formal Commission meeting, the four commissioners, supported by the secretary general, the coordinator of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC), and the research professional associated with the dossier, review and adopt the draft report that is sent to the college. The latter is invited to comment on the content of the report as well as on the conclusions, rulings, and opinions it contains. The Commission takes note of the college's feedback and adopts a final version of the report which includes a section on the comments made by the college. The final report is to be published on the Commission's website. At each of these validation steps, the draft report is modified and adjusted if required. These mechanisms, which are among the best practices observed within international higher education quality assurance agencies, enable the Commission to ensure the rigour, impartiality and equity of its rulings.

Conclusion

The evaluation of the effectiveness of Québec college quality assurance systems (SAQC) is a cyclical evaluation, comparable to that which is carried out by other quality assurance agencies in higher education. This perspective adheres to the value of the continuous improvement of the quality of college education. This second cycle is therefore a continuation of the first.

While presenting several elements of continuity, the second cycle expects the colleges to refine their analysis on the effectiveness of all their mechanisms. In addition, at the end of the process, the colleges develop an action plan to ensure the continuous improvement of the mechanisms they put in place, whose potential effectiveness will be assessed by the Commission. This second critical look will make it possible to measure the progress made since the first audit cycle and to pursue the continuous improvement of the quality of education, for the benefit of students in the college system.

SECOND PART
SELF-EVALUATION GUIDE

Self-evaluation process for the second audit cycle

During its self-evaluation process, the college is called upon to take a critical look at the effectiveness of its quality assurance system and to reflect this in a self-evaluation report. To guide its approach, the college prepares a self-evaluation plan. It collects relevant and sufficient data to document the mechanisms, carries out analyses, and determines, where appropriate, the actions needed to ensure the continuous improvement of its quality assurance system.

The following table illustrates the steps proposed for the self-evaluation process, which are described in the first part of this document on page 31.

Table 1
Overview of the steps of the self-evaluation process for the second audit cycle

Transition between the first and second audit cycle	**Step 1**	Updated portrait of the college's main characteristics
	Step 2	Review of the first audit cycle • Review of the Commission report • Review of the college action plan
Completion of the second audit cycle	**Step 3**	Analysis of the effectiveness of mechanisms for each component • List of the mechanisms implemented • Analysis, by criterion, of the ability to ensure continuous quality improvement • Review of the mechanisms • Conclusion about the effectiveness of the mechanisms for the component as a whole
	Step 4	General conclusion on the overall quality assurance system and challenges for the next audit cycle
	Step 5	College action plan

8. Mechanisms by component and by criterion are presented in Appendix C.

Self-evaluation plan and data collection

The college prepares an evaluation plan that will guide its self-evaluation process. It specifies in particular:

- the main challenges of the self-evaluation process;
- the data collection procedures and contributions of the information system(s);
- data analysis processes leading to conclusions and to the action plan;
- the methods of consultation and the persons, groups, and bodies involved;
- the composition of the self-evaluation committee;
- the delineation of responsibilities;
- the implementation timetable.

The Commission invites the college to gather the information at its disposal that it has obtained during the observation period. The college will also collect additional data at its own discretion. The Commission does not make any judgement on the self-evaluation process carried out by the college or on its self-evaluation plan. It does, however, consider among the main elements of a rigorous approach, the collection of relevant and sufficient data so that the college can analyze and demonstrate the effectiveness of its quality assurance system.

It should be recalled that the observation period extends from the end of the Commission's audit visit to the college during the first audit cycle to the submission of the college's self-evaluation report for the second audit cycle.

Step 1 : Updated portrait of the college's main characteristics

The college presents the main changes that occurred at its institution during the observation period. To this end, the Commission will provide the college with the information at its disposal for the college to update[9]. The portrait is included in the college's self-evaluation report.

In its update, the college will describe its main characteristics at the time of writing the second cycle self-evaluation report according to the following parameters:

- its mission;
- its organizational structure and staff members;
- its student population;
- its education offerings (programs offered, programs revised, programs evaluated);
- its training sites;
- its distance learning offerings;
- its education offering leading to a DEC or AEC outside Québec;
- any other information deemed relevant by the college (e.g., research centres, college technology transfer centres, recognition of prior learning and skills, etc.).

9. An updated portrait of the college's characteristics is presented in Appendix D.

Step 2 :
Review of the first audit cycle

The college reviews its first audit cycle, focussing on the main findings contained in the Commission's evaluation report and the action plan it drew up at the end of its self-evaluation process.

Review of the Commission report

The Commission will provide the college with a summary table setting out the main findings of its first cycle evaluation report: strengths, opinions delivered, and rulings rendered[10]. The college takes note of the summary table provided by the Commission and comments on it in its self-evaluation report.

Review of the college action plan

The college reviews the action plan it developed at the end of the first audit cycle and presents its main achievements in this regard.

10. A sample summary table from a Commission evaluation report is presented in Appendix E.

Step 3 : Analysis of the effectiveness of the mechanisms for each component

Step 3 is at the heart of the self-evaluation process since it aims to analyze the effectiveness of the mechanisms implemented. After a general presentation providing an overview of the actions to be carried out during this phase, questions are asked to guide the college in analyzing the effectiveness of the mechanisms for each component of its quality assurance system under audit.

Step 3 – General presentation

Step 3 is structured in such a way that the college conducts a criterion-based analysis to arrive at a conclusion for each component, which will gradually lead it to draw a general conclusion about the effectiveness of its quality assurance system and identify new challenges as planned in Step 4. Before carrying out this analysis, the college will list the mechanisms for each component of its quality assurance system and provide a brief description of each.

It should be recalled that the Commission renders a ruling on the capacity of the mechanisms and their management to ensure continuous improvement. In its report, the Commission provides a ruling for each component and another ruling for the college's overall quality assurance system (see page 37 of this document).

In rendering its rulings, the Commission takes into account the three evaluation points of reference defined in the framework:

1. The implementation of mechanisms.
2. The ability of all mechanisms to ensure continuous quality improvement because they:
   (a) take into account the aspects to be observed for each component criterion[11];
   (b) identify strengths and areas for improvement;
   (c) take charge of the improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement.
3. Review of the mechanisms.

11. In order to ensure a common understanding of the criteria, the Commission will specify the aspects to be observed which the college takes into account when analyzing the effectiveness of the mechanisms. For each of the components, pages 51 to 65 of this document present the aspects for each criterion.

The three evaluation points of reference are addressed, for each component, through the completion of Step 3.

1st evaluation point of reference - List of mechanisms implemented

In Step 3, the college first lists the mechanisms implemented during the second cycle observation period for each component of its quality assurance system. The college takes into account its types of education (regular and continuing education) and, if applicable, its training sites, its distance learning offerings, or its offerings outside Québec (DEC or AEC).

The list of mechanisms is included in the college's self-evaluation report and is accompanied by a brief description of each mechanism. The description provides a brief overview of what the mechanism consists of and what responsibilities are shared in its implementation.

In Appendix C, the Commission presents examples of mechanisms listed by component and by criterion. It provides templates to list mechanisms and questions to guide the description of each. These templates will be made available to colleges.

The college may choose to use its own material to establish the list of mechanisms; it is, however, called upon to take into account the fact that the analyses are carried out by criterion and by component. If the college considers it appropriate, it may reuse or adjust the descriptions provided in its self-evaluation report for the first audit cycle.

2nd evaluation point of reference - Analysis, by criterion, of the capacity of mechanisms to ensure continuous quality improvement

For each component subject to audit, the college analyzes, by criterion, all the mechanisms it implements. This includes the main mechanisms, i.e., those related to a regulatory obligation, namely institutional policies (including the Institutional Policy for the Evaluation of Academic Programs (IPEP) and the Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement (IPESA)), as well as institutional plans, the strategic plan, and the success plan.

The following questions guide the college in conducting its analysis:

- For each criterion, does the implementation of the mechanisms allow the college to:
  a) take into account the aspects to be observed?
  b) identify strengths and areas for improvement?
  c) take charge of the improvements to be made with a view to continuous improvement?

In its report, the college presents the result of its analysis by explaining how all the mechanisms implemented for a given criterion enabled it to identify strengths and areas for improvement and, if necessary, to make the adjustments to the mechanisms. The college also demonstrates how it has followed up on any adjustments made.

Throughout its text, the college provides examples to support its analysis. To do so, it will take advantage of the evaluation actions or operations it has carried out during the observation period. It does not necessarily have to carry out other operations if it considers that it has sufficient relevant data. To support its demonstration in this regard, the college attaches as an appendix to its self-evaluation report which includes the documents related to the examples mentioned in its text.

Examples of supporting documents to be attached include the following:

- In-depth or ongoing program evaluation reports;
- Follow-up of action plans from program evaluations;
- Work plans or annual reviews of administrations, services, departments, and program committees;
- Follow-up on the application of the IPEP or the IPESA;
- Reports on the revision of the IPEP or the IPESA;
- Assessments on the effectiveness of the strategic plan or success plan;
- Any other document deemed relevant.

3rd evaluation point of reference - Review of the mechanisms

In its report, the college presents the review of its main mechanisms. It briefly describes the revisions carried out during the observation period and the resulting modifications made to the mechanisms, if any, and assesses their impact on continuous quality improvement. Its analysis focuses first on the mechanisms related to a regulatory obligation: IPEP, IPESA, the strategic plan, and the success plan. This critical look at the 3rd evaluation point of reference complements its analysis of the effectiveness of the mechanisms.

To support its demonstration in this regard, the college draws upon operations conducted during the observation period.

Here are some examples of supporting documents to be attached:

- Self-evaluation reports on policy implementation (IPEP, IPESA);
- Policies adopted by the board of governors (IPEP, IPESA);
- Other policies adopted by the board of governors;
- Updated strategic plan;
- Updated success plan;
- Resolutions of the board of governors referring to the adoption of updated mechanisms;
- Any other document deemed relevant.

Conclusion about the effectiveness of the mechanisms for the entire component

At the end of the analysis performed in Step 3, the college draws a conclusion for the component. This conclusion reflects a general assessment of the effectiveness of the mechanisms for the entire component and may take the form of a judgement. In rendering its judgement, the college may use the Commission's assessment scale.

Component 1: Analysis of the effectiveness of mechanisms ensuring the quality of programs of study

1st evaluation point of reference: Implementation of mechanisms ensuring the quality of programs of study

CRITERION 1.1: MECHANISMS ENSURING THE QUALITY OF PROGRAMS OF STUDY ARE IMPLEMENTED.

The college compiles a list of mechanisms ensuring the quality of programs of study implemented during the observation period. An example of a template for compiling the list of mechanisms will be made available to colleges, thus making it possible to relate each mechanism to the evaluation criterion or criteria.

The college also briefly describes each mechanism listed. In its description, it indicates if they are implemented on a regular basis. To do so, if considered appropriate, it can reuse, adjust, or if need be, simplify the descriptions provided in its self-evaluation report for the first audit cycle.

The following questions can guide the college in the description of mechanisms:

- What does the mechanism consist of? What is its objective?
- How often is it being implemented?
- What are the main steps of its implementation?
- How are the implementation responsibilities delineated?

The college will incorporate the list of mechanisms and the description of each one in its self-evaluation report.

2nd evaluation point of reference: The capacity of mechanisms to ensure the continuous quality improvement of programs of study

CRITERION 2.1: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *THE RELEVANCE OF PROGRAMS OF STUDY.*

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - The objectives, standards, and content of programs of study are aligned with the expectations and the needs of the labour market or universities;
   - The objectives, standards, and content of programs of study take student expectations into account;
   - The educational project of the institution, regional development priorities, government policy directions, and general societal expectations are taken into account, when appropriate, in the objectives, standards, and content of the programs of study offered by the college.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **the relevance** of programs of study?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **the relevance** of programs of study from a perspective of continuous improvement?

CRITERION 2.2: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *THE COHERENCE OF PROGRAMS OF STUDY.*

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - Programs of study include a set of learning activities making it possible to meet program objectives and standards;
   - Learning activities are organized in a logical and sequential fashion to facilitate acquiring an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of program content;
   - The requirements specific to each learning activity (courses, laboratories, personal work) are established clearly and realistically and they correspond to college-level competencies; these requirements are accurately represented in course outlines as well as in the calculation of credits and in course weighting.

b) The objectives of programs of study leading to an AEC clearly define the competencies to be developed; the standards establish college-level competencies Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **the coherence** of programs of study?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **the coherence** of programs of study from a perspective of continuous improvement?

CRITERION 2.3: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *THE SUITABILITY OF PEDAGOGICAL METHODS AND STUDENT SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT.*

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - teaching methods are aligned with both the program objectives and each of the learning activities, and take into account student characteristics, facilitating the achievement of these objectives in compliance with set standards;
   - guidance, support and follow-up services, as well as screening measures designed to identify at-risk students, facilitate student success; the availability of teachers is sufficient to meet the needs of students with respect to supervision and support.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **the suitability of teaching methods and student supervision and support**?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **the suitability of teaching methods and student supervision and support** from a perspective of continuous improvement?

CRITERION 2.4: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *THE ALIGNMENT OF HUMAN, MATERIAL, AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES* WITH EDUCATION NEEDS.

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - Teachers are sufficient in number, they have suitable qualifications, and their competencies are diversified enough to take charge of all learning activities and meet program objectives;
   - Professional and support staff are sufficient in number, they have suitable qualifications, and their competencies are diversified enough to meet the needs of programs of study;
   - The motivation and competencies of instructors and other categories of personnel are maintained or developed through clearly-defined professional development activities and evaluation procedures from a professional development perspective;
   - teaching facilities, equipment and other material resources are adequate in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility;
   - Financial resources are sufficient to ensure the proper functioning of programs of study.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **the alignment of resources** with training needs?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **the alignment of resources** with training needs from a perspective of continuous improvement?

CRITERION 2.5: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS OF STUDY.*

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - student recruitment, selection and integration measures are effective in admitting candidates capable of succeeding in the programs;
   - student evaluation tools and methods used in the programs of study are effective in the evaluation of students' achievement of objectives according to the established standards;
   - course success rates are satisfactory and comparable to other programs of study and other institutions; a satisfactory proportion of students complete the programs within a reasonable time frame, depending on their status and characteristics;
   - graduates meet the established standards for the acquisition of competencies required by the programs of study.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **the effectiveness** of programs of study?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **the effectiveness** of programs of study from a perspective of continuous improvement?

CRITERION 2.6: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *THE QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF PROGRAMS OF STUDY.*

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - the organizational structure, methods of management, and means of communication are well articulated and promote the proper functioning of the programs of study and a program-based approach; clearly-defined procedures, using valid qualitative and quantitative data, facilitate regular assessment of the strengths and shortcomings of the programs and of each of the learning activities;
   - program descriptions are duly distributed and explained to both teaching staff and students; and
   - the implementation of the Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement (IPESA) is effective in the programs.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **quality management** of programs of study?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **quality management** of programs of study from a perspective of continuous improvement?

3rd evaluation point of reference: Review of mechanisms ensuring the quality of programs of study

CRITERION 3.1: MECHANISMS ENSURING THE QUALITY OF PROGRAMS OF STUDY ARE REVIEWED AND, WHEN NECESSARY, MODIFIED TO ENSURE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS.

- Was the IPEP reviewed as provided for, and, when necessary, modified during the observation period?
- Were other related mechanisms reviewed and modified, when necessary, during the observation period?
- Did the oversight of mechanisms enable the college to review and modify them as needed to ensure their effectiveness?

Conclusion for the component

- **To what extent do mechanisms and their management ensure the continuous improvement of programs of study?**
- **What are the actions to be considered for this purpose?**

Component 2: Analysis of the effectiveness of mechanisms ensuring quality evaluation of student achievement

1st evaluation point of reference: Implementation of mechanisms ensuring quality evaluation of student achievement

CRITERION 1.1: MECHANISMS ENSURING QUALITY EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ARE IMPLEMENTED.

The college compiles a list of mechanisms ensuring quality evaluation of student achievement implemented during the observation period. An example of a template for compiling the list of mechanisms will be made available to colleges, thus making it possible to relate each mechanism to the evaluation criterion or criteria.

The college also briefly describes each mechanism appearing on the list. In its description, it indicates if they are implemented on a regular basis. To do so, if considered appropriate, it can reuse, adjust, or if need be, simplify the descriptions provided in its self-evaluation report for the first audit cycle.

The following questions can guide the college in the description of mechanisms:

- What does the mechanism consist of? What is its objective?
- How often is it being implemented?
- What are the main steps of its implementation?
- How are the implementation responsibilities delineated?

The college will incorporate the list of mechanisms and the description of each one in its self-evaluation report.

2nd evaluation point of reference: The capacity of mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement of quality evaluation of student achievement

CRITERION 2.1: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *A FAIR EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.*

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - Students are informed about the rules for evaluating student achievement;
   - The evaluation is based on criteria known to students with a view to guaranteeing its impartiality;
   - The student has a right of appeal.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure a **fair** evaluation of student achievement?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure a **fair** evaluation of student achievement from a perspective of continuous improvement?

CRITERION 2.2: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *A FAIR EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.*

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - The evaluation of student achievement enables each student, individually, to demonstrate that he or she has met the objectives of the program according to the established standards;
   - The program's comprehensive exam enables each student to demonstrate that he or she has mastered all the competencies of his or her program;
   - The evaluation of student achievement is based on the course content taught;
   - The evaluation of student achievement is equivalent in the case of courses given by a number of different teachers.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **equity** in the evaluation of student achievement?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **equity** in the evaluation of student achievement from a perspective of continuous improvement?

3rd evaluation point of reference: Review of mechanisms ensuring quality evaluation of student achievement

CRITERION 3.1: MECHANISMS ENSURING QUALITY EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ARE REVIEWED AND, WHEN NECESSARY, MODIFIED TO ENSURE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS.

- Was the IPESA reviewed as provided for in the policy and, when necessary, modified during the observation period?
- Have other related mechanisms been reviewed and modified, when necessary, during the observation period?
- Did the oversight of mechanisms enable the college to review and modify them if needed to ensure their effectiveness?

Conclusion for the component

- **To what extent do mechanisms and their management ensure the continuous improvement of the evaluation of student achievement?**
- **What are the actions to be considered for this purpose?**

Component 3: Analysis of the effectiveness of mechanisms ensuring the quality of strategic planning

1st evaluation point of reference: Implementation of mechanisms ensuring the quality of strategic planning

CRITERION 1.1: MECHANISMS ENSURING THE QUALITY OF STRATEGIC PLANNING HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED.

The college compiles a list of mechanisms ensuring the quality of strategic planning implemented during the observation period. An example of a template for compiling the list of mechanisms will be made available to colleges, thus making it straightforward to relate each mechanism to the evaluation criterion or criteria.

The college also briefly describes each mechanism appearing on the list. In its description, it indicates if they are implemented on a regular basis. To do so, if considered appropriate, it can reuse, adjust, or if need be, simplify the descriptions provided in its self-evaluation report for the first audit cycle.

The following questions can guide the college in the description of mechanisms:

- What does the mechanism consist of? What is its objective?
- How often is it being implemented?
- What are the main steps of its implementation?
- How are the implementation responsibilities delineated?

The college will incorporate the list of mechanisms and the description of each one in its self-evaluation report.

2nd evaluation point of reference: The capacity of mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement of strategic planning quality

CRITERION 2.1: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *THE IMPLEMENTATION* OF STRATEGIC PLANNING.

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - The objectives of the strategic plan are addressed;
   - The means are aligned with the strategic plan's objectives;
   - Assigned responsibilities are carried out;
   - The calendar for the execution of the strategic plan is respected.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **the implementation** of strategic planning?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **implementation** of strategic planning from a perspective of continuous improvement?

CRITERION 2.2: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *FOLLOW-UP OF* STRATEGIC PLANNING *RESULTS.*

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - The indicators demonstrate progress toward achieving results;
   - The expected results are achieved.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **follow-up of** strategic planning **results**?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **follow-up of** strategic planning **results** from a perspective of continuous improvement?

3rd evaluation point of reference: Review of the mechanisms ensuring strategic planning quality

CRITERION 3.1: MECHANISMS ENSURING STRATEGIC PLANNING QUALITY ARE REVIEWED AND, WHEN NECESSARY, MODIFIED TO ENSURE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS.

- Has the strategic plan been reviewed on an annual basis and, when necessary, modified during the observation period?
- Have other related mechanisms been reviewed and modified, when necessary, during the observation period?
- Did the oversight of mechanisms enable the college to review and modify them if needed to ensure their effectiveness?

Conclusion for the component

- **To what extent do mechanisms and their management ensure the continuous improvement of strategic planning quality?**
- **What are the actions to be considered for this purpose?**

Component 4: Analysis of the effectiveness of mechanisms ensuring the quality of success-related planning

1st evaluation point of reference: Implementation of mechanisms ensuring the quality of success-related planning

CRITERION 1.1: MECHANISMS ENSURING THE QUALITY OF SUCCESS-RELATED PLANNING HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED.

The college compiles a list of mechanisms ensuring the quality of success-related planning implemented during the observation period. An example of a template for compiling the list of mechanisms will be made available to colleges, thus making it straightforward to relate each mechanism to the evaluation criterion or criteria.

The college also briefly describes each mechanism appearing on the list. In its description, it indicates if they are implemented on a regular basis. To do so, if considered appropriate, it can reuse, adjust, or if need be, simplify the descriptions provided in its self-evaluation report for the first audit cycle.

The following questions can guide the college in the description of mechanisms:

- What does the mechanism consist of? What is its objective?
- How often is it being implemented?
- What are the main steps of its implementation?
- How are the implementation responsibilities delineated?

The college will incorporate the list of mechanisms and the description of each one in its self-evaluation report.

2nd evaluation point of reference: The capacity of mechanisms to ensure the continuous improvement of success-related planning

CRITERION 2.1: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *THE IMPLEMENTATION* OF SUCCESS-RELATED PLANNING.

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - The objectives of the success plan are addressed;
   - The means are aligned with the success plan's objectives;
   - Assigned responsibilities are carried out;
   - The calendar for the execution of the strategic plan is respected.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **the implementation** of success-related planning?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **the implementation** of success-related planning from a perspective of continuous improvement?

CRITERION 2.2: THE MECHANISMS ENSURE *FOLLOW-UP OF RESULTS* OF SUCCESS-RELATED PLANNING.

a) Do the mechanisms take into account the following aspects?
   - The indicators demonstrate progress toward achieving results;
   - The expected results are achieved.

b) Do they make it possible to identify strengths and areas to be improved to ensure **follow-up of results** of success-related planning?

c) Do they make it possible to take charge of areas to be improved to ensure **follow-up of results** of success-related planning from a perspective of continuous improvement?

3rd evaluation point of reference: Review of mechanisms ensuring the quality of success-related planning

CRITERION 3.1: MECHANISMS ENSURING THE QUALITY OF SUCCESS-RELATED PLANNING ARE REVIEWED AND, WHEN NECESSARY, MODIFIED TO ENSURE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS.

- Has the success plan been reviewed on an annual basis and, when necessary, modified during the observation period?
- Have other related mechanisms been reviewed and modified, when necessary, during the observation period?
- Did the oversight of mechanisms enable the college to review and modify them if needed to ensure their effectiveness?

Conclusion fot the component

- **To what extent do mechanisms and their management ensure continuous improvement of success-related planning?**
- **What are the actions to be considered for this purpose?**

Step 4 :
General conclusion on the overall quality assurance system and challenges for the next audit cycle

Based on the demonstration provided by the college for each component, this step leads the college to examine the overall picture in order to draw a general conclusion on the effectiveness of its quality assurance system. At its discretion, the college can formulate a judgement on the effectiveness of its quality assurance system by using the Commission's assessment scale.

Also, the college looks back at the challenges it established at the outset, which guided it in putting the self-evaluation process into effect. The college can thus note how its self-evaluation process has been useful in improving the effectiveness of its quality assurance system.

The college drafts a summary which reviews the strengths and areas to be improved and it concludes by assessing its ability to ensure continuous quality improvement using the mechanisms it is implementing. It then reports on the challenges that have emerged for the next audit cycle and which help determine its action plan.

Conclusion for the overall quality assurance system

- **To what extent does the quality assurance system and its management guarantee continuous quality improvement?**
- **Did the analysis of the effectiveness of its quality assurance system enable the college to find answers to challenges it had targeted at the beginning of its self-evaluation initiative?**
- **What new challenges have emerged at the conclusion of the self-evaluation initiative?**

Step 5 : College action plan

The college will draft an action plan taking into account all the analyses realized and the challenges identified in Step 4. The college can present its action plan using its own tools. The Commission will offer colleges a sample template. The action plan is part of the college's self-evaluation report.

The Commission will evaluate the potential effectiveness of this action plan. To render its ruling, it will take into account the following two criteria:

Compliance:

This criterion makes it possible to establish whether the action plan exhaustively and explicitly contains elements deemed essential by the Commission, namely, actions to be undertaken and an implementation timetable based on the priorities established by the college, as well as an assignment of responsibilities.

Coherence :

This criterion refers to the alignment of the various actions foreseen in the action plan with their potential contribution for ensuring the continuous improvement of the quality assurance system. During its evaluation, the Commission pays particular attention to the fact that the plan's actions stem from the findings and analyses determined by the college, and that there is an alignment between the actions planned and the specific areas targeted for improvement.

The coherence criterion also makes it possible to assess whether all elements of the action plan form a harmonized, consistent whole. The Commission examines the logical links between elements and to a certain extent, the basis of these links.

The Commission uses the following assessment scale to rule on the potential effectiveness of the college's action plan:

- The action plan has a very high potential for effectiveness;
- The action plan has a high potential for effectiveness;
- The action plan has a medium high potential for effectiveness;
- The action plan has a low potential for effectiveness.

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http://www.hceres.fr

AGENCE POUR L'ÉVALUATION DE LA QUALITÉ DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR (AEQES)
http://www.aeqes.be/

COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION (CHEA)
http://www.chea.org/

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION (ENQA)
http://www.enqa.eu/index.lasso

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION (INQAAHE)
http://www.inqaahe.org/

AGENCE SUISSE D'ACCRÉDITATION ET D'ASSURANCE QUALITÉ (AAQ)
http://aaq.ch/fr/

QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (QAA)
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (WASC)
http://www.accjc.org

SERVICE DE L'ASSURANCE DE LA QUALITÉ DES COLLÈGES DE L'ONTARIO (CQASO)
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COMMISSION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR DES PROVINCES MARITIMES (CESPM)
http://www.cespm.ca/index.aspx

TERTIARY EDUCATION QUALITY AND STANDARDS AGENCY (TEQSA)
https://www.teqsa.gov.au/

Appendix A : Content of the self-evaluation report

1. **Introduction**
   The college's self-evaluation process: plan and issues
2. **Updated portrait of the college's main characteristics**
3. **Review of the first audit cycle**
   3.1 Review of the Commission report
   3.2 Review of the main realizations of the action plan developed by the college during the first audit cycle
4. **Analysis of the ability of mechanisms to ensure continuous quality improvement**
   Component 1: Mechanisms ensuring the quality of programs of study
   - List of mechanisms implemented
   - Analysis, by criterion, of the capacity of mechanisms to ensure continuous quality improvement
   - Review of mechanisms
   - Conclusion with respect to the effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure the quality of programs of study

   Component 2: Mechanisms ensuring quality evaluation of student achievement
   - List of mechanisms implemented
   - Analysis, by criterion, of the capacity of mechanisms to ensure continuous quality improvement
   - Review of mechanisms
   - Conclusion with respect to the effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure the quality of the evaluation of student achievement

   Component 3: Mechanisms ensuring the quality of strategic planning
   - List of mechanisms implemented
   - Analysis, by criterion, of the capacity of mechanisms to ensure continuous quality improvement
   - Review of mechanisms
   - Conclusion with respect to the effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure the quality of strategic planning

   Component 4: Mechanisms ensuring the quality of success-related planning
   - List of mechanisms implemented
   - Analysis, by criterion, of the capacity of mechanisms to ensure continuous quality improvement
   - Review of mechanisms
   - Conclusion with respect to the effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure the quality of success-related planning
5. **General conclusion with respect to the entire quality assurance system and challenges for the next cycle**
6. **College action plan**

Appendix B : Composition of the visiting committee and the role of experts

For each institution, the Commission establishes a visiting committee which helps in the analysis of the self-evaluation report, conducts the visit of the institution, and contributes to the formulation of opinions and rulings. The committee includes three external experts, the commissioner presiding the visit, and the research professional of the Commission, acting as secretary.

The mandate of the experts is as follows:

- To analyze the self-evaluation report, with tools specifically developed to this end;
- To identify items requiring further verification and/or clarification during the visit;
- To participate in the visit;
- To assist in formulating an assessment of the college's self-evaluation results and, where applicable, the action plan for corrective measures adopted by the college; and
- To validate the preliminary report prepared by the Commission research professional.

Experts are chosen because of their knowledge of the college system or their expertise in the areas of evaluation, quality assurance, and the like. They receive training as a prelude to fulfilling the responsibilities assigned to them. They are also informed about and subject to a code of ethics framing their actions, in which principles of confidentiality, impartiality, and respect prevail.

As part of this cyclical evaluation, the Commission continuously recruits and trains experts. The profile of the people sought is diverse so as to foster the complementarity of points of view of members making up the visiting committee. They can come from the college system and assume, for example, the duties of director general, deputy director general, director of studies, deputy director of studies, director of continuing education, director of human resources, teachers, professionals, and external members of the board of directors. Also, experts can come from the socioeconomic community or universities, whether as administrators or graduate students from the field of education.

Finally, the choice of experts is submitted for approval to the administration of the college visited to ensure the impartiality of the process.

Appendix C : Examples of mechanisms for each component

This appendix aims to provide colleges with examples of quality assurance mechanisms that they can use to support their demonstration in the self-evaluation report. These examples are drawn from different practices observed in colleges. This, however, is not a comprehensive list, nor does the Commission expect every college to adopt all of them. Examples of mechanisms are presented according to the different components of the quality assurance system and are specifically related to the criteria that address the effectiveness of mechanisms. It should be noted that a mechanism can be associated with several criteria or components.

Component 1
Mechanisms ensuring the quality of programs of study

Institutional mechanism linked to a regulatory obligation: the IPEP

Examples of mechanisms ensuring the relevance of programs of study

- Liaison mechanisms with universities and the labour market:
  - Analysis of information obtained by holding meetings with employers (college-industry committees, regional advisory committees of employers, etc.);
  - Analysis of information obtained by holding meetings with universities (DEC-BAC meetings for technical programs of study, other meetings with one or more universities to identify education needs, etc.);
- Analysis of data obtained through workplace internships;
- Analysis of data obtained through questionnaires (from graduates, alumni);
- Use of data from the *Relance Survey of College Graduates: Technical Training* published by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES) for technical programs of study resulting in the granting of a DEC or an AEC (employment status: people who are employed, looking for work, studying, etc.);
- Use of data compiled by the *Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire* (BCI) on the university educational pathway (admission rate, enrolment rate, etc.);
- Use of an institutional information system for monitoring relevance indicators, recording data such as the placement rate in connection with the training received, the university admission rate, etc.;

- Development, adoption, and review processes of local plans for programs of study;
- Documentary analysis; portraits of sectors or analysis of the training needs of universities published by the MEES, college educational project, sectoral workforce portraits, other documents related to regional training needs;
- Dissemination processes for documents used for the development, updating, and establishment of programs of study (terms of reference, standards for course framework modifications, etc.).

Examples of mechanisms ensuring the coherence of programs of study

- Development, adoption, and review process for competency flowcharts and course matrices;
- Development, adoption, and review process for local program of study proposals;
- Course grid modification process;
- Course framework policy;
- Course outline policy;
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for course frameworks;
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for course outlines;
- Use of the institutional information system;
- Program monitoring process (dashboards, annual reports on program implementation);
- Dissemination process for documents linked to the coherence of programs of study (exit profiles, flowchart, course frameworks including standards for final course assessments, program comprehensive exams, course outlines, etc.).

Examples of mechanisms ensuring the suitability of teaching methods and student supervision and support

- Development, adoption, and review process for course frameworks, which establish teaching method standards;
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for course outlines;
- Organization of pedagogical days or training activities concerning teaching methods based on objectives and standards;
- Analysis of pedagogical methods as part of teaching evaluation;
- Analysis of data on teaching methods obtained through student questionnaires (during training, for graduates, etc.);
- Program committee meetings on teaching methods;
- Student referral and monitoring process using counseling and support services;
- Screening, support, and monitoring measures for students in difficulty;
- Student supervision and support measures;
- Adoption, monitoring, and review process for the regulation on success.

Examples of mechanisms ensuring the alignment of human, material, and financial resources with training needs

- Human resources management policy;
- Employability measures designed for new teachers;
- Evaluation and improvement procedures for teachers and other categories of staff;
- Teaching evaluation process;
- Continuing training plans for teachers and other categories of personnel;
- Improvement policy;
- Identification, adoption, and monitoring process for improvement-related needs and activities;
- Personnel development policy;
- Development, adoption, and monitoring process for budgets allocated to programs of study;
- Development, adoption, and monitoring process for the development master plan (computer equipment, infrastructures, rooms, etc.);
- Development, adoption, and monitoring process for the specialized equipment acquisition and renewal plan.

Examples of mechanisms ensuring the effectiveness of programs of study

- Student recruitment, admission, and integration process;
- Student admission policies;
- Adoption, monitoring, and review process for the regulation on success;
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for course frameworks;
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for course outlines;
- Development, adoption, and review process for tools for evaluating student achievement (final course evaluations, program comprehensive assessments);
- Annual report analysis process as part of the continuous evaluation of programs;
- Use of the success indicator monitoring system;
- Drop-out cause monitoring process.

Examples of mechanisms ensuring quality management of programs of study

- IPESA review mechanism;
- Self-evaluation mechanism for IPESA application;
- Development, adoption, and review process for departmental rules or policies for the evaluation of student achievement;
- Planning, organization, and evaluation process for programs of study and for action plan monitoring;
- Development, approval, and review process for operating rules for program committees and for rules governing communications between teachers and between the latter and the administration;
- Development, adoption, and monitoring process for work plans and department and program annual reports;
- Use of the institutional information system;
- Development, adoption, and dissemination process for program dashboards;
- Process for disseminating program descriptions (to students and teachers).

Component 2
Mechanisms ensuring the quality of the evaluation of student achievement

Institutional mechanism linked to a regulatory obligation: the IPESA

Examples of mechanisms ensuring a fair evaluation of student achievement

- Development, adoption, and review process for departmental rules or policies for the evaluation of student achievement;
- Dissemination process for the IPESA;
- Communication procedure for the rules for evaluating student achievement (course outline, agenda, intranet, etc.);
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for course frameworks;
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for course outlines;
- Grades review process;
- Dispute management policy;
- Prior learning assessment and recognition policy.

Examples of mechanisms ensuring a fair evaluation of student achievement

- Development, adoption, and review process for departmental rules or policies for the evaluation of student achievement;
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for course frameworks;
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for course outlines;
- Development, adoption, and review process for tools for evaluating student achievement (final course evaluations, program comprehensive assessments);
- Prior learning assessment and recognition policy;
- Student file analysis procedure in connection with substitutions and equivalences;
- Consultation mechanisms between teachers (committees, meetings, etc.).
- Dissemination process for tools such as the framework for the development of program comprehensive assessments, the framework for the development of final course evaluations, program comprehensive assessment analysis grids, final course evaluation analysis grids, course outline analysis grids, etc.

Component 3
Mechanisms ensuring the quality of strategic planning

Institutional mechanism linked to a regulatory obligation: Strategic plan

Examples of mechanisms ensuring the implementation of strategic planning

- Development, adoption, and review process for annual institutional priorities;
- Plans for implementing the strategic plan;
- Development, adoption, and monitoring process for work plans and annual reports by administrations, services, and departments;
- Institutional work plans, work plans by administrations, departments, and programs (templates of work plans, etc.);
- Development, adoption, and review process for a management dashboard.

Examples of mechanisms ensuring follow-up of strategic planning results

- Follow-up process for indicators and for results achievement (use of dashboards, etc.);
- Annual review process for expected results and updates, if appropriate;
- Dissemination process for results obtained;
- Strategic plan mid-term report;
- Strategic plan effectiveness evaluation mechanisms.

Component 4
Mechanisms ensuring the quality of success-related planning

Institutional mechanism linked to a regulatory obligation: Success plan

Examples of mechanisms ensuring the implementation of success-related planning

- Process of analysis of the situation with respect to success and determining priorities for action ;
- Success plan implementation plans ;
- Development, approval, and monitoring process for success plan implementation ;
- Institutional work plans, work plans by administrations, departments, programs, or by people in charge of measures (work plan templates, etc.) ;
- Development, adoption, and review process for a management dashboard.

Examples of mechanisms ensuring the follow-up of results of success-related planning

- Follow-up process for indicators and for results achievement (use of dashboards, etc.) ;
- Annual review process for expected results and updates, if appropriate ;
- Strategic plan mid-term report ;
- Strategic plan effectiveness evaluation mechanisms.

Appendix D : Updated portrait of college main characteristics

College main characteristics	Portrait at the time of the 1st cycle	Have there been changes since the 1st audit cycle? (Yes/No)	New elements at the time of the 2nd cycle
College mission			
Organizational structure			
Personnel • Administrators • Professional staff • Teaching staff • Support staff			
Student population • Regular education • Continuing education			
Programs offered as regular education leading to a DEC • Pre-university programs of study • Technical programs of study			
Other: • Springboard to a DEC program			
Programs offered as continuing education • AEC • DEC			
Reviewed programs			
In-depth program evaluation			
Continuous program evaluation			
Training sites			
Distance education • DEC • AEC			
Education offered outside Québec • DEC • AEC			
Others (research centres, etc.)			

Appendix E : Commission evaluation report summary table

Component 1 :
Mechanisms ensuring the quality of programs of study

Ruling by the Commission on the effectiveness of mechanisms
Strengths • … • … • … • …
Opinions • … • … • …

Component 2 :
Mechanisms ensuring the quality of evaluation of student achievement

Ruling by the Commission on the effectiveness of mechanisms
Strengths • … • … • … • …
Opinions • … • … • …

Component 3 :
Mechanisms ensuring the quality of strategic planning

Ruling by the Commission on the effectiveness of mechanisms
Strengths • … • … • … • …
Opinions • … • … • …

Component 4 :
Mechanisms ensuring the quality of success-related planning

Ruling by the Commission on the effectiveness of mechanisms
Strengths • … • … • … • …
Opinions • … • … • …

Overall ruling by the Commission on the effectiveness of the college's quality assurance system

Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial

Québec

DEPUIS 1993 / ÉVALUER – CONTRIBUER – TÉMOIGNER