

The Bader International Study Centre
Terms of Reference

Educational Standards Committee

Terms of Reference

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| Name: | Educational Standards Committee |
| Contact: | Deputy Academic Director |
| Background: | <p>The “BISC Curriculum Committee” was formed in 2011 to provide curricular oversight of the courses and field schools offered at the BISC. After achieving the first objective of standardising the presentation of course information (in syllabi and on the virtual learning environment, onQ), the Committee took on many tasks outside its initial remit and articulated its first Terms of Reference in 2015. Since then, the Committee has engaged in continuing quality assurance, going beyond the mandated review of course syllabi and taking on an increasingly advisory role relating to pedagogical practice, professional development, course alignment with main campus variants, support of new instructors, and many other initiatives designed to promote academic excellence. In 2021, it was agreed that the Committee had by now far exceeded its original objectives and that its operations should be formalised within new Terms of Reference. Prompted by a more effective working relationship with the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committees on the Queen’s main campus, the BISC Committee determined to change its name to “BISC Educational Standards Committee” as this prevents confusion and better represents the objectives of this committee.</p> |
| Objectives and Remit: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assure academic excellence across all BISC offerings, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ developing a digital syllabus that is seamlessly integrated within the virtual learning environment, onQ; ○ reviewing course information and content via a transparent cyclical peer-review process (as a guideline, each course will be reviewed every three (3) years or when a significant change or event triggers a review); ○ overseeing alignment of BISC course variants with their main campus counterparts (including liaising with main campus departments as required); ○ staying at the forefront of pedagogical and educational technology innovation and using that knowledge to support instructors to enhance their course content and delivery. • To assure adherence to Queen’s University academic regulations and policies across all student-facing academic areas, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ keeping up to date with Queen’s University academic regulations and policies and ensuring BISC courses are compliant with them; ○ communicating amendments of the academic regulations or policies and offering training and practical support to instructors. • To support curriculum enhancement projects, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ collaborating with the Experiential Learning Department; |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ driving strategic priorities such as decolonising the curriculum and supporting the integration of the UN SDGs into curricular activities where possible; ○ supporting Student Services initiatives that are relevant to student academic success, such as the BISC Skills Award (BSA) and study skills workshops. ● To encourage all instructors to remain actively engaged with the quality enhancement process, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ creating a two-way dialogue about pedagogy and course development and ensuring accessible opportunities for discussion; ○ disseminating information about professional development opportunities organised by the BISC, by Queen’s Centre for Teaching and Learning, or external partners; ○ organising “syllabus drop-in sessions” to pre-empt any issues that may occur during the preparation required for a new term; ○ offering a one-to-one support structure so that all instructors have a contact person within the Committee. |
| <p>Communication:</p> | <p><i>General:</i> Decisions are made by the full Committee in meetings which will take place no less than four times per academic year, which is at quorum with four members present. In cases of disagreement a vote will take place, and the majority opinion will be final. In case of a no-majority outcome the Chair’s decision will be final. If the Chair is unable or unfit to lead, the Committee membership will report the situation to the Academic Director.</p> <p><i>Cyclical review:</i> Committee members individually review a selection of syllabi every term. The outcome of this review is discussed at a full committee meeting at which point decisions about responding to instructors are made. If, over time, a syllabus repeatedly falls short of the expected standard, or where Committee-requested changes are, the individual case will be referred to the Academic Director as the line manager of instructors.</p> <p><i>Complaints procedure:</i> If an instructor is dissatisfied with the actions or recommendations of the Educational Standards Committee, and the issues raised cannot be resolved through a dialogue, they should in the first instance request a private meeting with the Chair of the Committee. If a resolution cannot be reached, the instructor should refer the matter to the Academic Director.</p> |

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| <p>Amendment Dates:</p> | <p>23/02/2015; 17/06/2021;</p> |
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| Date for Next Review: | 2023 |
| Related Documents: | <p><i>Policies webpage:</i> https://www.queensu.ca/bisc/about-us/policies</p> <p><i>Educational Standards Committee webpage:</i> https://www.queensu.ca/bisc/faculty-home/teaching-resources/course-administration</p> <p><i>onQ template page (NetID required):</i> https://onq.queensu.ca/d2l/home/478836</p> |

