



# Quality Assurance Processes

## Program Objectives

The development of Program objectives is required in both the Cyclical Program Review process and the New Program Proposal process. Program objectives are also beneficial in communicating the worth of a degree: they clearly articulate to students, their parents, the campus community, and to future employers what the value of the degree is.

According to the [Quality Council Guidance](#), program objectives “explain the potential applications of the knowledge and skills acquired in the program; seek to help students connect learning across various contexts; situate the particular program in the context of the discipline as a whole; and are often broader in scope than the program-level learning outcomes that they help to generate.” They “describe to potential students why the discipline is important and explain how the program is unique and meaningful in the context of the discipline as a whole,” including referring to goals for students beyond the program, “such as to prepare students for study in allied disciplines at both the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as for professional work.” They can also “describe the range of learning opportunities the program intends to offer to students, for example, opportunities to engage with professionals, gain research experience, or acquire foundational knowledge of the field.”

It can be difficult to distinguish between program-level learning outcomes, which are the basis for curricular alignment within programs, and program objectives. There are no hard and fast rules, but the following can help in distinguishing them:

<b>Program Objectives</b>	<b>Program-Level Learning Outcomes</b>
Broader in scope (could align with a cluster of program-level learning outcomes)	Narrower in scope (could align with a cluster of course-level learning outcomes)
Statement of purpose or goal	What the learner will be able to do when the goal/purpose is met
Tell students what is special about the program	Tell students what they will achieve by completing the program

Can include a student's access to resources such as labs, experiential learning opportunities, internships, or study abroad programs.	Will be statements of the skills, knowledge, and dispositions a student will gain by using those resources.
What will be taught	What will be learned
Situate the program in the context of the discipline as a whole	Make explicit the expectations for student success by forming the criteria for assessment and evaluation
May not be measurable	Are measurable
Tell students what they will be able to do after completing the program, such as professional work	Tell students what they are expected to be able to do in order to complete the program
Could reference a public or social good/need, such as educating students to provide necessary services	Reference the abilities students will gain and develop

Program objectives connect to the Principal's Strategic Framework and the program-level learning outcomes connect to the Degree Level Expectations.

The following resources will help units frame their program objectives:

1. [The Principal's Strategic Framework](#)
2. [Queen's Major Maps](#)
3. The program's student-facing website

The following examples have been adapted only slightly from statements on program websites:

### **Chemistry, BScH<sup>1</sup>**

1. Students will engage in hands-on learning experiences and will gain transferable skills such as working in a team, critical thinking, and problem solving.
2. Students will learn to operate unique, state of the art, laboratory equipment, such as the instruments in the Nuclear Magnetic Resonance facility.
3. Students will be prepared for graduate studies in Chemistry, to work in governmental or industrial laboratories as chemists, and for professional programs such as law, dentistry, medicine, and business administration.

### **Global Development Studies, BAH<sup>2</sup>**

1. Students will learn core skills of university-level writing, critical thinking, and research techniques, while engaging important global issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Statements adapted from <https://www.chem.queensu.ca/undergraduate/future-undergraduate-students>.

<sup>2</sup> Statements adapted from <https://www.queensu.ca/devs/undergraduate/undergraduate-program-information>.

2. Students will have the opportunity to engage in international experiential learning.
3. Students will learn to connect big-picture analysis with grounded problem-solving approaches, which will prepare them for a wide range of career choices in an increasingly globalized job market.

For additional information on this requirement or the QUQAP process, please contact [quqap@queensu.ca](mailto:quqap@queensu.ca).