

Queen's University Learning Outcomes Framework

April 19, 2016



Preface

This Learning Outcomes Framework is meant to be both foundational and aspirational. It encompasses Queen's core values and presents ambitious challenges. It is a blueprint for students and faculty to plan, document and collate the richness of the student learning experience at Queen's.

Queen's prides itself in having a balanced academy, offering a transformative student learning experience in a research-intensive environment. At Queen's, learning takes place in courses and programs, in classrooms, libraries, labs, field studies, internships, and more. Valuable learning also takes place through engagement in volunteerism, student government, co-curricular student programming, international experiences, athletics, clubs and residences. In an effort to strengthen the learning environment, the university is investing in articulating learning from a student's perspective, reflecting the knowledge, skills and habits of mind that are gained through successful completion of a course or program.

Through the Council of Ontario Universities' Quality Council, Degree Level Expectations are mandated for undergraduate and graduate study, and almost all programs at Queen's now have identified learning outcomes. It is important that our prospective students and graduates be able to anticipate and articulate their learning experiences over the course of their degree, aggregating their learning across academic programs and co-curricular activities.

While the Learning Outcomes Framework is meant to encompass the vast diversity of learning at Queen's, it also attempts to differentiate and specify the comprehensive learning experience at Queen's. The aim is to define the unique characteristics of a Queen's degree by identifying the specific attributes and capacities of Queen's graduates. During the consultation process, the Learning Outcomes Working Group heard that the broader learning environment and the rich co-curricular opportunities available to students enables them to develop skills in leadership and interpersonal communication. The group also heard that the research-intensive learning environment facilitates deep and engaged learning, especially at the graduate level. Consequently, two of the categories that differentiate this framework from those of other universities are "Research-Focus | Practice-Orientation" and "Leadership."

Broad consultation, evidence gathering and analysis undertaken in the development of the learning outcomes confirmed these attributes as valued characteristics of Queen's graduates. Graduate students at Queen's have a unique perspective on learning, often immersed in research at a very deep level in collaborative and discipline-based learning communities. The working group heard from graduate students that they especially value their role in knowledge creation and dissemination, but are equally keen to develop professional skills to prepare them for a variety of career options. In order to ensure that the framework encompasses all levels of learning at Queen's, the working group has included illustrative examples to articulate the achievement of learning outcomes for different credentials, including bachelor's, professional master's, research master's and Ph.D. degrees.

Moreover, transformations in the educational landscape mean that Queen's now has many degree-seeking students who learn in a fully online environment and do not come to campus. It is vital that this increasingly significant group be included in the learning vision for Queen's and have equitable opportunities to develop skills associated with experiences inside and outside of the classroom.

The Learning Outcomes Framework is meant to guide the development of learning outcomes in courses and programs, in alignment with existing program-level outcomes and accreditation requirements.

There are a great number of ways in which the framework can be used, including:

- to enable prospective students to get a sense of learning at Queen's
- to provide current students with learning goals
- to assist graduating students in articulating their learning to future employers
- to assist students to aggregate their learning across a full degree or credential (e.g. in an ePortfolio)
- to encompass learning outcomes that span both curricular and co-curricular experiences
- to guide the development of program-level learning outcomes
- to inform long-term strategic planning and programming
- to strengthen and articulate Queen's distinctiveness
- to contribute to and enhance the QUQAP Cyclical Program Review process

Knowledge and Intellectual Capacities

Knowledge in area of specialization | Creative Thinking | Problem Solving | Critical Thinking | Quantitative Literacy
| Information Literacy

Description: Students critically engage with material and provide informed and innovative conclusions, judgments or solutions based on appropriate qualitative and quantitative information as needed, while recognizing the need for ongoing learning and the limits of knowledge.

Research-Focus | Practice-Orientation

Foundations for lifelong learning | Application of knowledge | Knowledge Creation and Dissemination | Inquiry & Analysis

Description: Students engage in learning and discovery, and transfer knowledge and skills to new situations, experiences and environments, in academic, personal and professional settings.

Leadership

Initiative & Persistence | Nurturing Self & Others | Integrity & Social Responsibility

Description: Students take initiative by providing vision, motivation and action in academic, personal and professional settings, guided by principles of integrity, social responsibility and an ethic of care.

Interpersonal Capacities

Collaboration | Written & Oral Communication | Digital Literacies

Description: Students make meaningful contributions in a group environment in traditional and media rich context with strong effort and a positive manner of interaction.

Personal Capacities

Self-Management | Disposition to improve | Ethical Reasoning | Respecting diverse ways of knowing

Description: Students manage and evaluate their own learning, behaviour, well-being and values, while practicing ethical decision-making in a variety of contexts.

Community Engagement

Civic Engagement | Global Learning | Intercultural Competence

Description: Students make a difference in their communities, both locally and globally, and develop a set of skills and attributes that support effective and appropriate interaction in diverse cultural contexts.

Illustrative Examples of Program-Level Outcomes Based on Queen's Learning Outcomes Framework

	Bachelor's	Professional Master's	Research Master's	PhD
<p>Knowledge and Intellectual Capacities Knowledge in Area of Specialization Creative Thinking Problem Solving Critical Thinking Quantitative Literacy Information Literacy</p> <p>Description: Students critically engage with material and formulate informed and innovative conclusions, judgments or solutions based on appropriate qualitative and quantitative information as needed, while recognizing the need for ongoing learning and the limits of knowledge.</p>	<p>Accurately interpret and assess quantitative and/or qualitative information following rigorous methodology appropriate to the discipline.</p>	<p>Demonstrate a systematic understanding of inter- and disciplinary knowledge and a critical awareness of current issues and/or new insights to lead processes that address definable problems relevant to the area of study.</p>	<p>Offer critical assessments of key theoretical and methodological issues and debates relevant to the area of study, with respect to scientific, historical, social, cultural, political, and/or economic contexts and implications.</p>	<p>Demonstrate, through critical literature review, a thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge that is at the forefront of their area of academic research or professional practice including, where appropriate, relevant knowledge outside the field and/or discipline.</p>
<p>Research-Focus Practice-Oriented Foundations for Lifelong Learning Application of Knowledge Knowledge Creation and Dissemination Inquiry & Analysis</p> <p>Description: Students engage in learning and discovery, and transfer knowledge and skills to new situations, experiences and environments, in academic, personal and professional settings.</p>	<p>Engage with scholarly material and, by applying discipline-appropriate practices and analyses, develop accurate conclusions.</p>	<p>Demonstrate competencies that enable use of established techniques of research and inquiry to create, interpret and apply knowledge.</p>	<p>Demonstrate competencies that enable use of established techniques of research and inquiry to create, interpret and apply knowledge, and the ability to evaluate critically and make judgements based on integration and interpretation of relevant information.</p>	<p>Be actively involved in discovery and knowledge creation, critique and synthesis of available information and understand its practical applications or implications. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate critically and make judgements based on integration and interpretation of relevant information.</p>
<p>Leadership Initiative & Persistence Nurturing Self & Others Integrity & Social Responsibility</p> <p>Description: Students take initiative by providing vision, motivation and action in academic, personal and professional settings, guided by principles of integrity, social responsibility and an ethic of care.</p>	<p>Demonstrate leadership skills in working with peers in the achievement of a specific task with explicit boundaries.</p>	<p>Demonstrate leadership skills suited to a professional setting, incorporating principles of personal responsibility, accountability and integrity.</p>	<p>Demonstrate leadership through advanced knowledge creation, transfer and dissemination, to different audiences and through engagement with peers, colleagues and other groups.</p>	<p>Demonstrate leadership through advanced knowledge creation, transfer and dissemination, to different audiences and through engagement with peers, colleagues and other groups.</p>

Illustrative Examples of Program-Level Outcomes Based on Queen's Learning Outcomes Framework

	Bachelor's	Professional Master's	Research Master's	PhD
<p>Interpersonal Capacities Collaboration Written & Oral Communication Digital Literacies</p> <p><i>Description:</i> Students make meaningful contributions in a group environment in traditional and media-rich contexts with strong effort and a positive manner of interaction.</p>	<p><i>Express ideas clearly and convincingly using a variety of media.</i></p>	<p><i>Convey complex and sensitive problems clearly and succinctly to diverse groups using appropriate media.</i></p>	<p><i>Convey complex and sensitive problems and arguments clearly and succinctly to diverse audiences using appropriate media.</i></p>	<p><i>Convey complex and sensitive problems and arguments clearly and succinctly to diverse audiences in and outside of the academy. Communicate ambiguous ideas and implications of research findings clearly and effectively.</i></p>
<p>Personal Capacities Self-Management Disposition to Improve Ethical Reasoning Respecting Diverse Ways of Knowing</p> <p><i>Description:</i> Students manage and evaluate their own learning, behaviour, well-being and values, while practicing ethical decision-making in a variety of contexts.</p>	<p><i>Articulate the professional, civic and ethical responsibilities within their field of study.</i></p>	<p><i>Demonstrate ethical behaviour in accordance with academic and professional standards.</i></p>	<p><i>Demonstrate ethical behaviour consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research.</i></p>	<p><i>Demonstrate ethical behaviour consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research.</i></p>
<p>Community Engagement Civic Engagement Global Learning Intercultural Competence</p> <p><i>Description:</i> Students make a difference in their communities, both locally and globally, and develop a set of skills and attributes that support effective and appropriate interaction in diverse cultural contexts.</p>	<p><i>Demonstrate critical self-reflection of one's own assumptions and values as applied to community problems and contexts.</i></p>	<p><i>Understand and discuss the impact of the academic and professional practices in global, societal and cultural contexts.</i></p>	<p><i>Demonstrate an ability to consider knowledge and research in local, regional and global contexts.</i></p>	<p><i>Demonstrate an ability to consider knowledge and research in local, regional and global contexts, and an appreciation of the significance to society broadly-speaking, including policy and culture, as appropriate.</i></p>