In accordance with Queen’s University Quality Assurance Processes (QUQAP), the School of Policy Studies submitted a self-study in February 2013 to the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) and the School of Graduate Studies to initiate the cyclical program review of its PMPA/MPA programs. The approved self-study presented program description, learning outcomes, a library report and analyses of data provided by the Office of Institutional Planning and the School of Graduate Studies. Appendices to the self-study contained CVs for each full-time member teaching in the program.

Three arm’s-length external reviewers (Dr. Susan Mayer, Professor, Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies and the College, University of Chicago; Dr. Nancy Olewiler, Professor and Director, School of Policy Studies, Simon Fraser University; and, Dr. Jennifer Medves, Vice-Dean (Health Sciences) and Director of Queen’s School of Nursing) examined the materials and conducted a site visit on March 4, 5 & 6, 2013. The site-visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) and the Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and meetings with graduate students, librarians, cognate heads, staff and faculty.

In their report (June 10, 2013), the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the PMPA/MPA programs meet the QUQAP evaluation criteria and are consistent with the University’s mission and academic priorities. The Review Team noted that strengths of the programs included its excellent retention and time-to-completion records, its exceptional support staff and qualification of its adjunct appointments, most of whom have served at high levels in the federal or provincial governments. The Review Team also highlighted the School of Policy Studies’ very active Speakers Series that is well attended and has outstanding individuals who are nationally known and respected in their fields.

The Review Team did report on a number of challenges, including the need for: a strategic plan; rethinking of the curriculum to ensure it is aligned with the current policy landscape in Canada, and disengaged students who are seeking a professional degree and have little time or incentive to engage in the intellectual life of the school or university.

Based on all of the above documentation, a Final Assessment Report and an Implementation Plan were prepared by the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and approved by the Provost (April 23, 2014).

The PMPA/MPA programs in the School of Policy Studies have been approved to continue and are scheduled for their next review in 2020-2021.

Prepared by the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)
24 April 2014