

Making the case for a new graduate program (is there a need?)

One strategy to identify program need is to survey stakeholders (e.g. prospective students, potential employers of graduates of the program, accrediting bodies, ...) to get their input and opinions. Below are possible questions that you may wish to include in a survey to develop a business case for a proposed new program (edit as appropriate). It is assumed that an appropriate overview will be provided that includes a **brief** outline of the proposed program (description, duration, mode of delivery, estimated tuition), requirements and main learning outcomes as background information for the respondent.

Program name: <level> degree in <discipline/profession> program (e.g. Master of Science in Aging and Health)

Possible survey questions to address labour market/societal need:

As an organization and employer in the _____ sector, what are three main attributes, skills or specialized knowledge that you consider essential within your organization?

As an organization and employer in the _____ sector, identify the main gaps in knowledge and/or skills that you have identified in new hires with similar educational backgrounds.

Is there a need in your organization for personnel with the knowledge, training and skills acquired by those who complete a <level> degree in <discipline/profession> program? (Y/N)

If yes – Is this need expected to increase over the next 5-10 years?

From the course listings and program structure described, please indicate any topics or subject matter that you think should be considered for inclusion

Are there any that you think could be deleted? Please specify

Would you recommend the <level> degree in <discipline/profession> program to your employees? (Y/N/uncertain)

If yes – would you consider supporting employees wishing to enrol in the proposed program in terms of tuition support? Providing time-release? Other? (please specify)

If you had a vacant position in your organization, would you seek applicants who have completed the proposed program? (Y/N)

Would graduates of the proposed program be of greater potential value to your organization than had they not completed the program? (Y/N)

Why or Why Not?

Possible survey questions to address student interest and demand

Please rate your level of interest in a <level> degree in <discipline/profession> program? (very high, somewhat high, neither high nor low, somewhat low, very low)

Rate the likelihood of submitting an application for admission to the proposed program if it were launched within the next 1-2 years? (almost certain, very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

Do you believe that the proposed curriculum and learning outcomes will advance your career opportunities? (Y/N)

If yes – in what way?

What three program elements are most important to you (whether they are part of the proposed program or not)?

Have you actively searched for programs similar to the one proposed? (Y/N)

Is your interest in the program influenced by the following (check all that apply)

Mode of delivery: on-site face-to-face; on-line; blended (<number> short period(s) of on-site face-to-face followed by on-line)

The courses offered and program structure

Experiential learning opportunities

Flexibility in enrolment status (i.e. full-time or part-time)

Availability of funding support

Estimated program cost

Other (please specify)

What is your preferred mode of delivery? (list options as per above)

Would you recommend to others that they consider enrolling in the proposed program? (Y/N)

Provide the main reasons why or why not.

Would you like us to contact you when we begin accepting applications to the <level> degree in <discipline/profession> program? (Y/N)

If yes - please provide your contact information