

Guidelines for PDACs

Version 6

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What is a Program Development Advisory Committee?

Program development at Seneca Polytechnic is guided by input from industry and community stakeholders to ensure currency and relevancy.

The academic Chair will establish a Program Development Advisory Committee (PDAC) on a temporary basis to advise on the development of a new program of instruction – degree or non-degree. Where appropriate, an existing Program Advisory Committee (PAC) with the relevant expertise may act as the PDAC/fulfill the role of the PDAC to direct and guide the development of a new program.

PDACs and PACs consulting on a new program proposal will follow the guidelines outlined below.

What is the purpose and role of a PDAC?

The purposes of the PDAC includes:

- confirming and clarifying the need for the program
- providing information on the scope and nature of potential employment for graduates
- providing input on the proposed program, curriculum and program name
- providing insights on the technical, technological and soft skills, and knowledge graduates should possess by the end of program

When the PDAC is satisfied with the relevancy and currency of a new program as captured in the new program proposal curriculum, members will provide a formal motion of support recommending that the proposed program proceed to the next phase of the approval process.

Once all internal and external approval bodies have approved the new program, the PDAC will be dissolved, having completed its mandate. Upon the launch of the new program, a

standing PAC will be established consistent with Seneca's [PAC Policy](#) and [terms of reference](#).

Where an existing PAC is used to guide and approve a new program of instruction, members may put forward a second motion recommending that the standing PAC continue to advise the program upon its launch.

Who can be a PDAC member?

PDACs are composed of individuals external to Seneca. Seneca employees, including contract faculty, cannot serve as a voting member on a PDAC.

PDAC members should represent a cross section of employers, practicing professionals and representatives from regulatory/accrediting bodies and professional associations who have a direct interest in and a diversity of experience and expertise related to the particular occupational area or discipline addressed by the proposed program. In alignment with Seneca's Strategic Plan, members will represent diverse social identities and equity-deserving groups.

All members must sign the [Consent to Release Information Form for PDACs](#) and a [non-disclosure agreement](#) form as a membership condition.

The academic Chair will facilitate the completion of PDAC forms and signatures. Completed forms will be filed by the school leading the new program development and submitted by email to pac@senecapolytechnic.ca for archiving.

PDAC members who perceive that their private or personal interests conflict or have the potential to conflict with an issue under discussion at a PDAC meeting will have an obligation to excuse themselves from the discussion and abstain from voting on the specific issue. A member's declaration of conflict of interest will be recorded in the meeting minutes.

How many members do PDACs have?

A non-degree PDAC will have a minimum of six members.

A degree PDAC will have a minimum of eight members, including one academic expert in the field, external to Seneca, in accordance with Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) requirements.

All appointed members will have voting privileges. Quorum is represented through a clear majority of voting members (50 per cent plus one).

What is the role of Seneca faculty and staff at PDAC meetings?

The academic Chair, or designate, will schedule, preside over and prepare materials for all meetings.

Seneca faculty and staff, including a member of the Program Quality team, may attend PDAC meetings in a non-voting resource capacity at the discretion of the academic Chair.

Typically, a member of the Program Quality team attends PDAC meetings as a guest to ensure the academic programming is developed in adherence with Seneca's strategic priorities and Ministry, regulatory and external quality assurance requirements.

A recording secretary will be assigned by the academic Chair. Minutes are required for all PDAC meetings. The formal motion of support recommending that the proposed program proceed through to the next phase of the approval process will be captured in the meeting minutes.

What is the time commitment to serve on a PDAC?

Typically, there will be two to four PDAC meetings over a four-to-18-month period (degree development may take longer).

These guidelines have been adapted from the Sheridan Standards and Practice for Professional Advisory Council, September 2020, version 3, Appendix 1: Ad Hoc Professional Advisory Councils

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