

Guidelines for AQIP Action Project Teams

These guidelines are intended as a basic overview of, and guidelines for, the role of AQIP Action Project Leaders and Teams. They may at some point be formalized but currently exist only as a general guide.

AQIP Action Project Teams

Each AQIP Action Project Team will be issued its charge by the AQIP Steering Team. This charge will be endorsed by a cabinet-level Project Sponsor and will include:

- a delineation of projects to carry out,
- research to conduct,
- and proposals to develop and submit.

Working within the existing governance structures and extant policies and practices of the college, the Action Project Team has the authority to exercise independent discretion in carrying out its charge, including interacting with the college and the larger community as necessary for the completion of its charge. Naturally, the team shall not engage in activities beyond the scope of its own charge nor usurp the authority of existing college personnel, units, and organizations. If any questions arise as to this, they should immediately be referred to the AQIP Steering Team for clarification prior to any action being undertaken.

Reporting is primarily the responsibility of the Team Leader(s). Each Action Project Team shall report its proceedings, activities, efforts and accomplishments in a succinct yet thorough manner by:

1. regularly preparing Team meeting minutes to be posted on the AQIP website,
2. reporting progress to the Steering Team,
3. submitting a closing out form for the Systems Portfolio, and
4. reporting to its Project Sponsor any college planning implications of the action project.

Purpose of Action Project Teams

The purpose of the individual Action Project Teams will be specified most clearly in the Action Project Declaration and supporting documentation. Specific details will vary greatly across project areas. The Action Project Teams are charged with seeing their project to fruition. The Action Project Teams are primarily functional groups. That is to say, team members are selected on the basis of the skills they bring to the project and the contribution they can make in seeing this project through to a successful conclusion, within the allotted timeframe. Representation of various groups and constituencies on campus is important, and every effort will be made in the constitution of such groups to ensure sufficient representation of stakeholders. However, the Action Project Teams are not primarily representative. Rather, they are task oriented. Action Projects are selected on the basis of their potential positive impact upon the college as an institution. The role of the Action Project Teams is to realize this potential.

Role of the Action Project Team Leader(s)

Team Leader positions are voluntary and the AQIP Steering Team is very grateful to those members of the college who have accepted this important role in improving the institution. It is expected that Team Leaders will always be consulted on the make-up of the teams they are to

run although the exact process of this is yet to be determined. The role of the Action Project Team Leader is to motivate, guide and direct.

In this respect Team Leaders have two equally important functions:

I. ORGANIZATIONAL & MOTIVATIONAL:

- Providing direction and impetus to the Team by establishing clear goals (based on the Action Project Declaration),
- keeping the project on track and the Team on task,
- delegating sub tasks to appropriate members, and
- coordinating the contributions of the individual team members to the task at hand.

In particular, keeping the project to the specified timeframe is, insofar as it is possible, an important component.

II. COMMUNICATION & REPORTING:

- Communicating with the rest of the college community regarding the Action Project (where appropriate soliciting information and input) and
- reporting back at regular intervals to the AQIP Steering Team are both important functions of the Action Project Team Leader(s).

Regular updates, an Annual Update (for project active during the month of March) and a final report are important elements in all Action Projects. The Leader's report will form the basis of the final Action Project report submitted to AQIP and will make an important contribution to the accreditation Systems Portfolio.

Suggested Approach

The approach taken by the Team Leaders will vary considerably depending upon the task at hand and the personality of the individual involved; there can be no "one size fits all" approach. Having said this, PROCESS is a very important consideration. Training in appropriate "quality tools" will be available to all Team Leaders and these processes and techniques should be utilized wherever deemed appropriate and helpful. These "quality tools" stress inclusivity, communication, careful problem analysis, rational decision-making and goal establishment and the measurement of success relative to the desired outcomes. Transparency and record keeping are also important elements.

Where questions and/or issues emerge regarding the Action Projects, Team Leaders should always feel comfortable bringing these back to the AQIP Steering Team for additional support or guidance.