

Open Pathway Quality Initiative Proposal

Panel Review Form

Review Process

The Quality Initiative Proposal review occurs through a panel process. A panel of two peer reviewers evaluates the Quality Initiative Proposal, provides observations and constructive commentary, and either approves the proposal with or without minor modifications or, in exceptional circumstances, requests resubmission of the proposal. There is no penalty or negative action attached to a request for resubmission.   
  
At the completion of the review process, HLC notifies the institution of its approval or expectation for resubmission. Once the proposal is approved, the institution is free to begin its Quality Initiative.

Review Categories for the Quality Initiative

The panel evaluates the institution’s Quality Initiative Proposal based on sufficiency of scope and significance; clarity of purpose; evidence of commitment and capacity; and appropriateness of timeline.

## Instructions for Peer Review Panel Members

The panel reads the Quality Initiative Proposal and completes the attached report template following the steps below. The review process should take no more than four weeks from receipt of the Quality Initiative Proposal to submission of the panel’s report.

1. On receipt of the Quality Initiative Proposal, the reviewers schedule a phone conference.
2. **Individual Review.** Each reviewer evaluates the proposal independently, determining whether the response to each review category is acceptable or not acceptable and justifying the determination with two or three observations per category. **Note:** Proposals may not align precisely with the review categories. Therefore, reviewers should consider the entire document as evidence for any category. Reviewers should evaluate holistically rather than point-by-point in the categories.
3. **Consensus Review.** The reviewers share their draft evaluations with each other and complete the report.

* If the reviewers agree to approve the Quality Initiative Proposal with or without minor modification, they finalize their report and submit it HLC (see point 4).
* If the reviewers agree that the response in more than one category is not acceptable, they should request that the institution resubmit the proposal. The reviewers then finalize the report and submit it to HLC.
* If the institution is required to resubmit its Quality Initiative Proposal, the revised proposal is due within 30 days. HLC staff will send the resubmitted proposal back to the panel, who will review the proposal again and write a final report.

1. **Report Submission.** One of the reviewers submits the final report as a Word document to HLC at [hlcommission.org/upload](http://www.hlcommission.org/upload), selecting “Pathways/Quality Initiatives” from the list of submission options to ensure the report is sent to the correct HLC staff member. The file name for the report should follow this format: QI Proposal Review <Name of Institution>.
2. **Notification to Institution.** HLC sends the report with a cover letter to the institution.

## Open Pathway Quality Initiative Proposal Review Form

Date of Review:

Name of Institution:       State:

Institutional ID:

Reviewers (names, titles, institutions):

Review Categories and Findings

1. **Sufficiency of the Initiative’s Scope and Significance**

* Potential for significant impact on the institution and its academic quality.
* Alignment with the institution’s mission and vision.
* Connection with the institution’s planning processes.
* Evidence of significance and relevance at this time.

**Finding:**

The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates acceptable scope and significance.

The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate acceptable scope and significance.

**Rationale and Comments:** (Provide 2–3 statements justifying the finding and recommending minor modifications, if applicable. Provide any comments, such as highlighting strong points, raising minor concerns or cautions, or identifying questions.)

1. **Clarity of the Initiative’s Purpose**

* Clear purposes and goals reflective of the scope and significance of the initiative.
* Defined milestones and intended goals.
* Clear processes for evaluating progress.

**Finding:**

The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates clarity of purpose.

The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate clarity of purpose.

**Rationale and Comments:**

1. **Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Initiative**

* Commitment of senior leadership.
* Commitment and involvement of key people and groups.
* Sufficiency of the human, financial, technological, and other resources.
* Defined plan for integrating the initiative into the ongoing work of the institution and sustaining its results.
* Clear understanding of and capacity to address potential obstacles.

**Finding:**

The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates evidence of commitment and capacity.

The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate evidence of commitment and capacity.

**Rationale and Comments:**

1. **Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative**

* Consistency with intended purposes and goals.
* Alignment with the implementation of other institutional priorities.
* Reasonable implementation plan for the time period.

**Finding:**

The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates an appropriate timeline.

The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate an appropriate timeline.

**Rationale and Comments:**

General Observations and Recommended Modifications

Panel members may provide considerations and suggested modifications that the institution should note related to its proposed Quality Initiative.

Conclusion

Approve the proposed Quality Initiative with or without recommended minor modifications. No further review required.

Request resubmission of the proposed Quality Initiative.

**Rationale and Expectations if Requesting Resubmission**

**Timeline and Process for Resubmission**   
*(HLC staff will add this section if the recommendation is for resubmission.)*