

Quality Assurance and Improvement Program

1312: External Assessments

External assessments must be conducted at least once every five years by a qualified, independent reviewer or review team from outside the organization. The chief audit executive must discuss with the board:

- The need for more frequent external assessments; and
- The qualifications and independence of the external reviewer or review team, including any potential conflict of interest.

Interpretation:

A qualified reviewer or review team demonstrates competence in two areas: the professional practice of internal auditing and the external assessment process. Competence can be demonstrated through a mixture of experience and theoretical learning. Experience gained in organizations of similar size, complexity, sector or industry, and technical issues is more valuable than less relevant experience. In the case of a review team, not all members of the team need to have all the competencies; it is the team as a whole that is qualified. The chief audit executive uses professional judgment when assessing whether a reviewer or review team demonstrates sufficient competence to be qualified.

An independent reviewer or review team means not having either a real or an apparent conflict of interest and not being a part of, or under the control of, the organization to which the internal audit activity belongs.

Compliance Steps:

- VSU's Chief Audit Executive will engage a qualified, independent outside reviewer at least once every five years to conduct an external quality assessment or self-assessment with independent validation of VSU's Internal Audit Department. The potential need for more frequent external assessments or self-assessment with independent validation, as well as the qualifications and independence of the external reviewer or review team, including any potential conflict of interest, will be discussed with the VSU Board of Visitors.
- In preparation for an external quality assessment or self-assessment with independent validation, tools within the IIA's *Quality Assessment Manual for the Internal Audit Activity* will be used.
- Documentation supporting external assessments (e.g., internal assessment results, external assessment reports, etc.) is kept on file within the Internal Audit Department.