Final Assessment Report Medical Biophysics
Submitted by SUPR-G to SCAPA

Programs:	**Medical Biophysics**	**Clinical Medical Biophysics**
Degrees Offered:	MSc, PhD	MSc
Approved Fields:	*Prior to review* • Medical Imaging • Microcirculation and Cellular Biophysics • Orthopaedic Biomechanics and Biomaterials • Medical Physics and Cancer ***remove fields as part of this review. No fields going forward***	*none*
External Consultants:	Cari Whyne, Professor, Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering Sunnybrook Research Institute and University of Toronto	Jan Suentjens, Professor and Director, Medical Physics Unit, Department of Oncology McGill
Internal Reviewers:	Jan Polgar, Professor Occupational Therapy and Health and Rehabilitation Sciences	Julia Abitol, PhD Trainee Anatomy and Cell Biology
Date of Site Visit:	November 23-24, 2017	
Evaluation:	*Good Quality with Report (update September of 2019) with full report September 2020*	
Approved by:	*SUPR-G on April 23, 2019* *SCAPA on INSERT DATE*	

Executive Summary
The Medical Biophysics program at Western is very strong, with internationally renowned faculty, excellent infrastructure/equipment, generally well funded research programs and a high level of scholarly productivity. Students are very engaged in the program, productive and feel valued by faculty. The flexibility of program requirements, which allow students to take additional courses as needed, seems to work well for students. The learning outcomes are clearly identified and linked to Western's GDLEs and to the mission of the university.

Significant Strengths of Program:
- Faculty are very strong, with international reputations; extremely productive
- The infrastructure for the most part is excellent, providing opportunity for the students and necessary equipment to allow them to complete their research
- Graduate chairs (current and previous) are viewed as highly supportive by the students
- Flexibility of the program requirements provide opportunities for students to tailor courses to their needs
- The ability of students to complete the requirements of the CAMPEP program is seen as a strength by the students

Suggestions for improvement & Enhancement:

- The CAMPEP tuition is high and not aligned with the tuition of other institutions that also offer this program. This high tuition is causing strain on the supervisors who are unable to support students who wish to enter this program.
- Faculty members in the core program do not have the same space and infrastructure as do those located at Robarts, LRCP or Lawson. These core faculty members have a severe lack of space, have had their space taken away and been removed to other space that does not meet their needs (both in terms of footprint as well as space that is adequate for their equipment…eg., computers). This lack of space causes problems for the ability of faculty members to complete their research as they are unable to recruit trainees for their labs. In some cases grant funds have been returned. There is also a concern that successful faculty members may leave due to space issues.
- Faculty have challenges with access to students. There is an insufficient number of students in the Medical Biophysics program in relation to the capacity of faculty members to support trainees. Some attempts have been made to recruit students from other departments in which faculty are cross-appointed. Outreach is needed at different levels in order to attract students to this program.
- Students across the programs have little opportunity outside of seminars and courses to engage and learn from each other. There is little interaction among students at the different sites. Students do not sit on many committees in the faculty.
- There is a need for more transparency and democracy in the administration of the department, with input and inclusion of faculty from across all sites. Faculty/departmental meetings should occur regularly as planned. Currently, these are site-specific and have resulted in division among the faculty.

Recommendations required for Program sustainability:	Responsibility	Resources	Timeline
Develop a space plan that addresses the graduate supervision needs of faculty in the core program	Dean Department Chair	Space planning	Fall 2020
Reconsider the PhD mid-level examination	Graduate Program Chair Four identified MBP graduate executive members MBP Graduate Executive Curriculum Subcommittee		September 2018
Encourage creation of a students' council to support interaction among students, particularly across the program's multiple sites.	Graduate Program Chair Students	Modest administrative support from department	September 2018

Create an outreach plan with the aim of recruiting/attracting more students to the program (Outreach to high schools, undergraduate programs at Western and other institutions)	Graduate Program Chair Graduate Council and members	Departmental administrative support	Fall 2018
Develop a communication plan to ensure that faculty and students across the program's multiple sites all receive relevant information and all have opportunity for input as relevant	Department Chair Graduate Program Chair		
To address the challenges related to the fact that the program is distributed across multiple sites, explore options for scheduling and location of the seminars to support faculty attendance	Graduate Program Chair Executive Committee		September 2018
Exit surveys are needed to track graduated students. Exit survey needs to be created, process for administration determined prior to first implementation.	Graduate Program Chair MBP Graduate Executive Committee		December 2018
Consider a strategy to support Clinical faculty who face challenges in accepting new graduate students due to a lack of long term grant funding support	Graduate Program Chair MBP Graduate Executive Committee		Ongoing