

NATIONAL 4-H COUNCIL

National 4-H Curriculum Peer Review Process Overview

Updated 9/1/2020

Overview

This guide will provide a short introduction to curriculum, the purpose of conducting a curriculum review, the curriculum review process, and the responsibilities of serving as a peer reviewer for curriculum. After that, each section of the review form will be discussed in detail – including an explanation of the criteria, where to find supporting resources, and how to evaluate the criteria.

- Curriculum
- Review Purpose
- Review Process
- Reviewer Responsibilities
- Review Form

Curriculum

4-H curriculum is defined as the sum of all learning experiences.

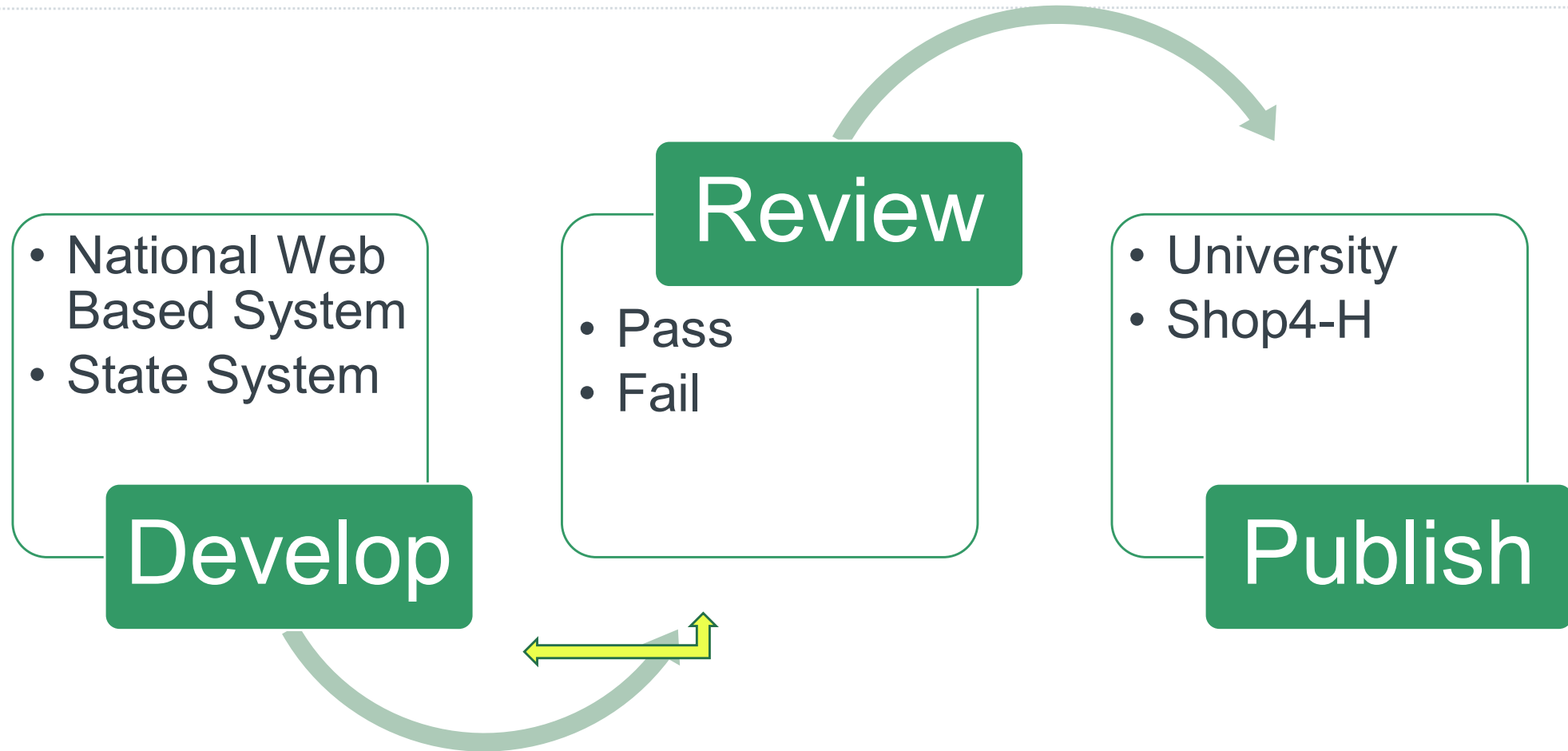
- Outputs:
 - Activities, events, workshops, trainings, field trips
- Context:
 - Club, school enrichment, afterschool, camps
- Inputs:
 - Print and on-line learning materials
 - Intentional for youth and adults

Peer Review Purpose

The purpose of conducting a peer review for all 4-H curriculum is to ensure that only the best materials are being produced and implemented within the 4-H program. The guiding principles for the review process incorporate the following elements:

- Support and advancement of science, health and well-being, and civic engagement through foundational, critical, and emerging issues
- Content is framed around the essential elements, inclusivity, and lifelong employability skills
- Learning experiences are developmentally appropriate
- Content has scope and sequence, has objectives and standards, and is research based
- Individual and group learning are valued, youth and adults are both learns, and
- Curriculum is high quality with a comprehensive development process.

Curriculum Process



Reviewer Selection

Reviewer 1

- Content Expert
- Different State

Reviewer 2

- PYD Expert
- Different State

Reviewer 3

- At-Large
- Different State

Review Process

1

- Reviewer is selected
- Reviewer is sent review request/invitation

2

- Reviewer accesses curriculum
- Reviewer completes the review form

3

- Reviewer feedback is sent to the submitter/author

Reviewer Responsibilities

- Three Weeks to complete review
- Make recommendations
- Provide specific comments that will be returned to the author

Review Form Sections

- Overview
- Guidance
- Target Audience
- Quality Content
- Learning Method
- Learning Style
- PYD
- References
- 4-H Name & Emblem
- Presentation
- Overall Rating

Review Form/Overview Questions

Preview Review Form

Overview questions

Overview questions are required for all reviews submitted on Scholastica.
All responses are **visible only to editors** and will not be shown to the author.

Overall Rating :

1 ★☆☆☆☆

2 ★★☆☆☆

3 ★★★☆☆

4 ★★★★☆

5 ★★★★★


For this manuscript, I recommend: :

Accept

Revise and resubmit

Reject

Comments for the editor :

B | **I** |  can't be blank

Please give feedback intended to help the editor make a publication decision

- Overview Question responses will not be visible to the authors

Review Form/Open Response Questions

Open response questions

Checklist of implementation guidance.

- Length of Time
- Materials Needed (if any)
- Safety Precautions Identified (if needed)
- Purpose Statement Provided
- National Educational Standard Identified (or linked to)

If the checklist of items are appropriately included/provided in the curriculum please comment with "PASS." If they are not included please comment with "FAIL." PLEASE PROVIDE SPECIFIC COMMENTS beyond "Pass" or "Fail" for items that need to be corrected. ;

 author will see response

Target Audience

If the target audience is appropriate for the target audience included in the curriculum, curriculum description, and/or submission worksheet please comment with "PASS." If they are not included or not appropriate for the audience identified please comment with "FAIL." PLEASE PROVIDE SPECIFIC COMMENTS beyond "Pass" or "Fail" for items that need to be corrected. ;

 author will see response

- All other section responses will be visible to the author; however they will not know who the name of the reviewers.
- Reviewers comment must include the word PASS or FAIL
- Reviewers should also provide specific comments on edits or improvements they recommend – especially if they rate it as FAIL.

Comments Criteria

Comments will go back to the person who submitted the curriculum. It is very important that specific reasons for the failure of any criteria to be explained so that the submitter knows what revisions need to be made. Revisions tend to be only as good as the feedback provided. The job of the reviewer is to provide the information and guidance that will lead the submitter to success. It is also important to put yourself in the submitter's role and write comments in a way that you would find helpful and supportive. The comment section is not only for criticism but also for giving praise to the sections that are particularly well done.

- Received by the submitter
- Specific, clear, and detailed
- Constructive criticism
- Positive feedback

Implementation Guidance

The purpose of the implementation guidance section is to make sure that someone preparing to teach this curriculum has all the necessary preparation information to create a successful learning experience.

- Is the length of time needed for each lesson indicated?
- Is there a list of any needed materials or preparation work?
- Are any needed safety precautions clearly identified and described?
- Is there a purpose statement or objective provided?
- Are appropriate national standards that the lesson relates to identified or linked to?

If all these guidance features are provided – as appropriate – then a passing score can be given for this section. If any of these features is needed and missing, then this section fails the criteria. A specific explanation as to which feature failed should be provided by the reviewer in the comment section at the end of the review form.

Checklist of implementation guidance.

- Length of Time
- Materials Needed (if any)
- Safety Precautions Identified (if needed)
- Purpose Statement Provided
- National Educational Standard Identified (or linked to)

The reviewer Should make sure that all activities included in the curriculum meet the implementation guidance checklist.

Review Response Requirements:

- Pass or Fail Rating **REQUIRED** and
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS** in addition to the **PASS** or **FAIL** so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.

Target Audience

The person submitting the curriculum will identify the age of the target audience. The job of the reviewer is to determine if the content is developmentally appropriate for the target age indicated. It is important to consider the appropriateness of the experience in relation to the participant's developmental age, the depth of the content, and the context in which it might be delivered.

Experiences should be both challenging and interesting without being overwhelming. Physical abilities, cognitive abilities, social abilities, and emotional abilities must all be carefully considered.

If the content is judged to be appropriate, then a passing score can be given for this section. If not, a specific explanation as to why it failed should be provided by the reviewer in the comment section at the end of the review form.

Indicate the target audience for this material.

- Lower Elementary (K-2)
- Upper Elementary (3-5)
- Middle School / Junior High (6-8)
- High School (9-12)
- Collegiate (Undergraduate)
- Adult Volunteer
- 4-H Professional
- General Public

The reviewer should evaluate the content to be sure that it is appropriate for the target audience that was identified by the authors in the submission worksheet.

Review Response Requirements:

- Pass or Fail Rating **REQUIRED** and
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS** in addition to the **PASS** or **FAIL** so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.

Quality Content

Quality content is one of the foundations of 4-H curriculum. Content should be current, relevant to both the activity and the learner, research based, and accurate. There are occasions when one of these standards does not seem appropriate. For example, a lesson plan for grooming a dog may not seem to be particularly current (since the basic techniques do not frequently change), but the information still needs to be accurate, relevant to proper dog care, and the techniques presented be based on proven research for effectiveness. In this section, the reviewer must use their own judgment in determining the appropriateness of each quality standard.

If all these quality standards are present – as appropriate – then a passing score can be given for this section. If any of these standards is needed and missing, then this section fails the criteria. A specific explanation as to which standard failed should be provided by the reviewer in the comment section at the end of the review form.

Checklist of quality content standards.

- Content is current**
- Content is relevant**
- Content is research based**
- Content is accurate**

The reviewer should evaluate the content to be sure that it meets quality standards as appropriate. (Not all standards are appropriate for every format.)

Review Response Requirements:

- Pass or Fail Rating REQUIRED and**
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS in addition to the PASS or FAIL so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.**

Learning Method

The submitter should indicate the learning method or methods the content is designed around. Many methods have a place in non-formal learning programs and, in fact, could build over time for an extended learning program or across learning experiences. The extent to which youth as learners will direct the learning experience will follow from the outcomes and help guide learning method choices. Although only three methods are indicated at the time of this recording, this section of the review form will be updated to provide a broader range of methods and delivery approaches.

The appropriateness of a learning method is determined by how well it supports and enhances the goals or objectives of the activity. If the learning method is judged to be appropriate, then a passing score can be given for this section. If not, a specific explanation as to why it failed should be provided by the reviewer in the comment section at the end of the review form.

One or more of the following learning methods is clearly utilized.

- Experiential Learning**
- Inquiry Based Learning**
- Life Skill Development**

The reviewer should evaluate if the learning methods for each activity are appropriate.

Review Response Requirements:

- Pass or Fail Rating REQUIRED and**
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS in addition to the PASS or FAIL so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.**

Learning Style

Learning styles are not really concerned with “what” learners learn, but rather “how” they prefer to learn.

Learners will use multiple ways to give, receive and store information, and most will have a preferred style. It is important not to categorize learners by learning style preference. Learning styles can be a point along a continuum and change with time, subject matter, and other factors. Understanding learning style preferences and providing a variety of experiences for youth, allows them the greatest margin of success in learning new skills and concepts. There are three major learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic/tactile. It is important to incorporate all three learning styles. This allows youth to not only maximize the potential for learning using their preferred style, but to experience the other styles as well. This builds their capacity for learning no matter what style is used.

Sometimes it is not possible to incorporate all three learning styles into a single activity, however, all three styles should be incorporated somewhere into a series of activities. If the learning style is judged to be appropriate, then a passing score can be given for this section. If not, a specific explanation as to why it failed should be provided by the reviewer in the comment section at the end of the review form.

One or more of the following learning styles is clearly utilized.

- Visual**
- Auditory**
- Tactile**

The reviewer should evaluate if the learning style for each activity are appropriate.

Review Response Requirements:

- Pass or Fail Rating REQUIRED and**
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS in addition to the PASS or FAIL so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.**

Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development is a model that highlights the things youth need to become successful. It focuses on strengths instead of limitations.

Engagement of the learner is important for positive youth development as it increases the learner's self-efficacy in both the knowledge and skill being taught. Learning experiences that are inclusive in nature enrich the educational experiences of youth as they engage with and accommodate diversity while building knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Youth that value inclusive environments and appreciate diversity will be better equipped to function effectively and creatively in a rapidly changing and globally networked world. The essential elements of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity focus on social, physical, and emotional well-being, and serve as a key framework within the positive youth development model. Each individual element is important. However, it is the combination of these elements that create an environment that promotes positive youth development. These elements ensure that experiences, programs, and activities intentionally offer opportunities for hands-on, experiential learning in environments where youth feel safe, can master new skills and abilities, and develop the confidence they need to contribute to their local communities in a positive way. Sometimes it is not possible to incorporate all four essential elements into a single activity, however, all four elements should be incorporated somewhere into a series of activities.

If the youth development standards are judged to be present, then a passing score can be given for this section. If not, a specific explanation as to why it failed should be provided by the reviewer in the comment section at the end of the review form.

Checklist of key positive youth development standards and principles.

- Lessons engage the learner
- Lessons are culturally and ethnically sensitive
- Lessons incorporate one or more of the essential elements (belonging, mastery, independence, generosity)

The reviewer should evaluate if positive youth development standards and principles are met in each lesson. If a series of lessons, each essential element is used at least once in the series. the learning style for each activity are appropriate.

Review Response Requirements:

- Pass or Fail Rating **REQUIRED** and
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS** in addition to the **PASS** or **FAIL** so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.

References Documented

Copyright is a form of protect provided by the laws of the United States (title 17, U.S. Code) to the authors of “original work of authorship,” including literary, dramatic, musical, artistic, and certain others intellectual works. This protection is available to both published and unpublished works. Section 106 of the 1976 Copyright Act generally gives the owner of copyright the exclusive right to do and to authorize others to do the following:

- To reproduce the work;
- To prepare derivative works based upon the work;
- To distribute copies to the public by sale or other transfer of ownership, or by rental, lease or lending; and
- To perform or display the work publically.

It is illegal for anyone to violate any of the rights provided by the copyright law to the owner of copyright.

Facts that are considered 'common knowledge' - those that a reasonably well-educated person could be expected to know – do not need to be documented with a citation.

Facts or statistics that are more obscure or pertain directly to your work will need to be documented with a citation.

If the content provided is judged to be appropriately referenced, then a passing score can be given for this section. If not, a specific explanation as to why it failed should be provided by the reviewer in the comment section at the end of the review form.

Shows evidence of crediting original sources and receiving copyright permissions as appropriate.

The reviewer should evaluate if references are appropriately credited.

Review Response Requirements:

- Pass or Fail Rating REQUIRED and**
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS in addition to the PASS or FAIL so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.**

4-H Name and Emblem

The 4-H name and emblem is intended to represent the ideals of the 4-H youth development program. As such, there are specific standards related to its use that must be upheld. The key standards for use of the emblem state that:

- The emblem must be used in its entirety
- The emblem may not be distorted, flipped, angled or otherwise altered from its upright position
- The emblem stem must point to the right
- No image or text may be placed under, over or otherwise obscure any part of the emblem
- The color of the emblem must follow official guidelines, and
- The emblem can not endorse or imply endorsement of any product or material.

If all the standards are met, then a passing score can be given for this section. If not, a specific explanation as to why it failed should be provided by the reviewer in the comment section at the end of the review form. The only time this section would not apply, is if the curriculum has been submitted by a third-party vendor (or non-extension-based organization). Only educational materials created by extension can use the 4-H name and emblem on their materials.

Checklist of key 4-H Name & Emblem standards.

- Emblem is used in its entirety
- Emblem is not distorted, flipped, angled or otherwise altered from its upright position
- Emblem stem points to the right
- No image or text is placed under, over or otherwise obscures the emblem
- The color of the emblem follows official guidelines
- The emblem does not imply endorsement of any product or material

The reviewer should evaluate if the material meets 4-H Name & Emblem graphic standards and guidelines are met.

Review Response Requirements:

- Pass or Fail Rating **REQUIRED** and
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS** in addition to the **PASS** or **FAIL** so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.

Presentation of Information

Basic presentation standards need to be met in all 4-H curriculum or materials. This includes:

- Correct spelling, grammar and punctuation
- A clear and coherent flow of ideas and information
- If images and graphics are used, they need to be easily read, contribute to the content, and be inclusive in their depictions

If all of the standards are met, then a passing score can be given for this section. If not, a specific explanation as to why it failed should be provided by the reviewer in the comment section at the end of the review form.

Checklist of presentation standards.

- Correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation**
- Coherent flow of information and ideas**
- Images and graphics (if used) are easily read, contribute to the content, and inclusive in depiction**

The reviewer should evaluate if the information in each lesson meets presentation standards

Review Response Requirements:

- Pass or Fail Rating REQUIRED and**
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS in addition to the PASS or FAIL so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.**

Overall Rating

Like all the other sections, the overall rating is scored on a pass or fail basis. If all the individual criteria sections have passed, then the overall rating is a pass.

If ANY of the individual criteria sections failed, then the curriculum must receive an overall rating of fail.

The Reviewer should assign an overall PASS or FAIL rating for the curriculum

- PASS: This Curriculum has passed all review criteria.**
- FAIL: This Curriculum does not pass all review criteria.**
- PROVIDE DETAILED COMMENTS in addition to the PASS or FAIL so that authors can make the appropriate corrections.**

More Information

If you have any questions about curriculum or the peer review process, check out the curriculum development website at 4-H.org or send an email to curriculum@4-H.org .

[https://4-h.org/
professionals/curriculum-development/](https://4-h.org/professionals/curriculum-development/)