FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS 2025

This section provides tailored focus group questions for each participant group: Current Students, Graduates, and Community Partners. The questions are designed to encourage open discussion and deeper insights aligned with the Self-Study Guide. It is expected that programs will use the questions below in the focus group discussions. If desired, programs may ask additional questions.

Current Students

Program Alignment & Learning
- How well do you feel the program's mission is reflected in your courses and assignments?
- Share an example of a course or assignment that felt especially aligned -- or misaligned -- with the program's goals?

Academic Experience
- What aspects of the course workload feel balanced or overwhelming?
- How do you feel about the variety and challenge level of assessments?

Classroom Environment
- How are you supported when discussing sensitive topics in class?
- How is equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging integrated?
- How are topics like Indigenous knowledge and Truth and Reconciliation integrated?
- How are topics in trauma-informed practice integrated?

Practicum Experience
- What has been the most valuable part of your practicum so far?
- What challenges have you faced during your practicum, and how were they addressed?

Faculty and Support
- How do instructors support your learning and professional growth?
- How do faculty encourage a sense of community within the program?

Professional Identity
- How has the program shaped your understanding of what it means to be a CYC professional?
- How have you been prepared to work within the CYC scope of practice?

Graduates

Program Relevance
- Looking back, how well did the program prepare you for your current role?
- Explain any tasks or roles you felt under-prepared for as a CYC professional.

Workplace Application
- Share a specific example of how something you learned in the program helped you succeed at work.
- How did your practicum experiences translate into real-world skills?

Professional Growth
- How has your professional identity evolved since graduation?
- How connected do you feel to the CYC program or faculty?

Curriculum and Structure
- Describe any gaps in the curriculum that became apparent after entering the workforce.
- How well did the course sequencing support your learning progression?

Feedback and Improvement
- What strategic improvement would you recommend for the program over the next five years?

Community Partners
(practicum sites, employers, sector professionals)

Student/Graduate Readiness
- How well do students or graduates demonstrate the competencies needed for entry-level CYC roles?
- Are there any areas where you feel they need more preparation?

Practicum Experience
- What was your experience hosting practicum students?
- What support would help you supervise students more effectively?

Program Collaboration
- How responsive is the program to your feedback or changes in the sector?
- What interests do you have in supporting the program in areas such as co-designing curriculum or guest lecture?

Impact and Value
- Share a success story involving a student or graduate.
- What single improvement would most enhance your partnership with the program?

FOCUS GROUP FACILITATOR GUIDELINES 2025

These guidelines provide a structure which you may choose to use in hosting focus groups.

Welcome Message

"Welcome everyone and thank you for joining us today. My name is [Facilitator's Name], and I will be facilitating our discussion. We appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences with us. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us improve our program."

Purpose of the Session

"The purpose of this focus group is to gather insights and feedback on various aspects of our program. We want to understand your experiences, identify areas for improvement, and explore how we can better support our students, graduates, and community partners."

Ground Rules

"Before we begin, let us go over a few ground rules to ensure a productive and respectful discussion:

1. Confidentiality: What is shared in this room stays in this room. We want everyone to feel comfortable sharing openly.
2. Respect: Please listen actively and respect each other's opinions. There are no right or wrong answers.
3. Participation: We encourage everyone to participate, but it is okay to pass if you do not feel comfortable answering a question.
4. Time: We have a limited amount of time, so let us try to stay on topic and keep our responses concise."

Tips for Facilitating Discussion

As the facilitator, your role is to guide the discussion, ensure everyone has a chance to speak, and keep the group on track. Here are some tips:

1. Open-Ended Questions: Use open-ended questions to encourage detailed responses.
2. Probing: If a participant's response is brief, ask follow-up questions to get more information.
3. Summarizing: Periodically summarize key points to ensure understanding and keep the discussion focused.
4. Neutrality: Remain neutral and avoid leading questions or expressing your own opinions.

Transitions Between Themes

To help the discussion flow smoothly, use transitions between themes. Here are some examples:

1. "We have talked about your academic experiences. Now let us discuss your practicum experiences..."
2. "Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the curriculum. Let us move on to discuss faculty support..."
3. "We have covered a lot about the program structure. Next, let us talk about your professional growth since graduation..."

Closing Statement

"As we come to the end of our session, I want to thank you for your valuable insights and participation. Your feedback is crucial in helping us improve and support our community better. If you have any additional thoughts or questions, please feel free to share them now. Otherwise, we appreciate your time and wish you all the best."