



# Policy and Guidance on course information

**Education Committee**

**Valid from Michaelmas term 2015**

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## Version history

1.0	June 2015	Original publication	Approved by Quality Assurance Subcommittee
1.1	June 2016	Minor update	Approved by PVC (Education) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints and appeals template revised to reflect changes in University Regulation and Procedure</li> </ul>
2.1	May 2017	Updates	Approved by Quality Assurance Subcommittee. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Amendments related to RPT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insertion of requirement to include information about the recommended pattern of teaching (RPT) in section 3.1 of the course handbook template (for UG course handbooks only).</li> <li>Insertion of new Annex B and consequent relabelling of the Complaints and appeals template as Annex C.</li> </ul> </li> <li><u>Amendments made as a consequence of the publication of the revised <i>P&amp;G on UG learning and teaching</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insertion in section 2.4 of the course handbook template concerning the provision of information about the research-teaching nexus.</li> <li>Insertion in section 3.1 of the course handbook template of a requirement for the inclusion of information explaining the purpose of tutorials (for UG course handbooks only).</li> <li>Rewording in section 3.5 in relation to the information required about the involvement of supervisors in the preparation of dissertations and other submitted work.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of additional requirements for the provision of information about the workload expected of students in term-time and vacations in section 3.6 of the course handbook template.</li> <li>• Inclusion of a link to the <i>Policy on recording lectures by students</i> in section 7.4 of the course handbook template.</li> </ul> <p>c. <u>Minor amendments to update the P&amp;G:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tweak to section 5.6 of the course handbook template to with reference to employability and the provision of an additional weblink.</li> <li>• Updated cross-references to other P&amp;G documents (in section 4.3 and 4.8 of the course handbook template and removal of out-dated cross-reference to the <i>P&amp;G examiners</i> in section 4.4.</li> <li>• Deletion of references to material being sourced from programme specifications or statements of provision in sections 2.2, 2.3, 5.2, 5.4 and 5.5 of the course handbook template.</li> <li>• Amendment of paragraph 5.1 to indicate the date at which programme specifications and statements of provision were discontinued.</li> <li>• Deletion of references to recent changes (which were true in June 2015 but are now out-of-date) in paragraph 7.2.</li> <li>• Removal of sentence in paragraph 3.2 setting out plans for a review of the content and structure of the <i>Examination Regulations</i>. Such a review may occur in the future but is not currently prioritised.</li> </ul>
2.2	June 2018	Updates	<p>Approved by Quality Assurance Subcommittee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification of information provision requirements for students on joint courses (whether joint honours schools or courses taught across more than one department/faculty), see paragraph 4.4. Changes to the course handbook template (Annex A) and to the complaints and appeals template (Annex C) are marked in yellow.</li> <li>• Update of references from OUSU to Oxford SU.</li> </ul>
2.3	August 2020	Minor updates	<p>References to <i>P&amp;G Examiners</i> replaced with references to the <i>Examinations and Assessment Framework</i>.</p> <p>Addition of prompts to the Course handbook template (Annex A) for inclusion of information about responses to the Covid-19 pandemic. Such information has been <b>added in green text</b>.</p>
2.4	May 2022	Updates	<p>Approved by the chair of Quality Assurance Subcommittee</p>

			<p>References to WebLearn and Student Administration and Services replaced with Canvas and Student Registry respectively.</p> <p>Within the course handbook template (Annex A):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Removal of Covid-19 pandemic-related text.</li><li>• Inclusion of expectations regarding good academic practice for online open-book exams (4.4)</li><li>• Creation of separate sub-sections for 'sitting your in-person examinations' (4.7), 'sitting your online examinations' (4.8), 'submitted work' (4.9), and 'problems completing your assessment' (4.10).</li></ul> <p>Additions are highlighted in yellow.</p>
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## 1. Background

1.1. Responsibility is delegated to Education Committee on behalf of Council for oversight of:

- teaching, learning, and assessment; and
- academic and pastoral support and guidance;

(Council Regulations 15 of 2002, Section 2.3 (e) and (g))

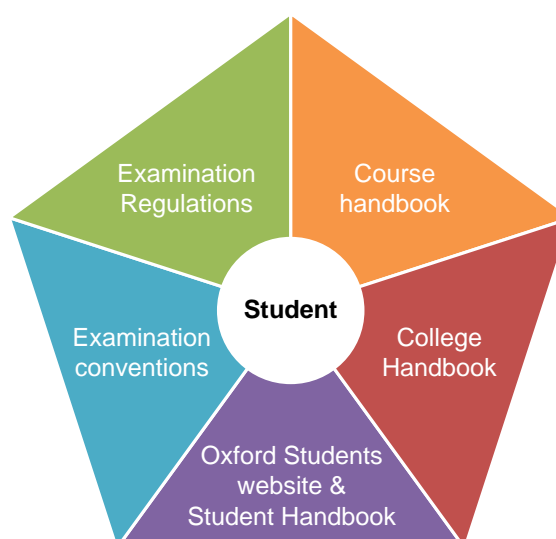
1.2. This document sets out Education Committee's policy on the information that should be provided to students in relation to their course of study. It incorporates sector expectations in the form of the UK Quality Code, in particular elements of *Part A: Academic Standards, Chapter B1: Programme design, development and approval* and *Part C: Information about higher education provision*.

1.3. In this document all references to departments should be read as also referring to faculties.

## 2. Scope

2.1. Information for students whilst they are studying is provided through a range of mechanisms including the Examination Regulations, examination conventions, College Handbooks and the Oxford Students website and Student Handbook (formerly the Proctors' and Assessor's Memorandum).

2.2. This document specifically considers information provided by departments for students following undergraduate or taught graduate courses.<sup>1</sup> Traditionally this has been provided in the form of a 'course handbook'.



## 3. The definitive record of a course

3.1. The definitive record is a description of the essential framework of a course: its curriculum structure and the way that it is assessed. The relevant general and special regulations in the *Examination Regulations*, supplemented by the relevant course

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<sup>1</sup> It is planned that guidance in relation to the information provided for postgraduate research students will be developed in due course; some elements of the template in Annex A may be useful and the principles outlined in section 4 should inform development.

handbook and examination conventions, form the definitive record of a course. The definitive record of a course can only be changed through due process. In the event that there is a conflict between the *Examination Regulations* and the course handbook, the definitive record is as set out in the *Examination Regulations*.

- 3.2. The *Examination Regulations* have evolved over time without a set template or pattern for their drafting or development. This has led to variations in their structure and in the level of detail they contain between types of awards and between subject areas.

## 4. Format and availability of course information

- 4.1. Course information may be presented in the form of a single document or as multiple documents or pages housed on a webpage, intranet, or Canvas site. In this document the term 'course handbook' will be used to refer to all formats. When deciding on a format, departments should be mindful of the need to keep a record of changes and maintain easily accessible and verifiable archives of all versions of course handbooks (see paragraphs 4.7 - 4.9 below).
- 4.2. All course handbooks should be available either on a public webpage or at minimum should be accessible to anyone with an Oxford Single Sign-On account. They contain essential information which is of use to audiences beyond the individual students undertaking the course, and as such need to be accessible to the wider community including: college staff, the Proctors, Education Policy Support, and Student Registry. Making them publicly accessible means they can also be utilised by prospective students.<sup>2</sup>
- 4.3. The information must be:
- easy to find
  - up to date
  - written in an accessible and easy to understand way
  - well organised and simple to navigate
  - consistent with other key sources of student information
  - constructed to avoid duplication by linking to material available elsewhere.

Students are entitled to rely on the information in course handbooks.

- 4.4. A course handbook should be provided for each cohort. Undergraduate handbooks should normally be separated into those covering First Public Examination (FPE) and Final Honour School (FHS). If there is not a dedicated handbook for joint honour schools, particular attention should be paid to ensure information provided is consistent between the two subject areas, and that coverage of key information is still comprehensive. If there is a dedicated handbook for joint honour schools, particular attention should be paid to the clarity of the information, including how information from single honours school handbooks is cross-referenced or repeated. Information in

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<sup>2</sup> The course handbook template in Annex A includes a statement in relation to prospective students (section 1.1).

handbooks for joint honours schools should be checked carefully for any erroneous references to single honours schools.

- 4.5. Where considered appropriate, course handbooks for postgraduate taught courses, may be combined with information for postgraduate research students, but the key information specified in Annex A must be included.
- 4.6. Course handbooks should be systematically updated during the Long Vacation and the completion of this process should be reported to the relevant department academic committee.
- 4.7. Minor textual corrections can be made after publication with notification to students of the new version undertaken through routine communication methods. However, if any substantive changes are required to the information contained within a course handbook once it has been issued, all students should be notified individually of its re-publication, their attention drawn to the changes and an invitation to raise any concerns included. This should only be necessary on an exceptional basis. Any changes should take into account guidance available on the consideration of vested interests.<sup>3</sup> Editions of course handbooks should be carefully numbered, and any change should result in a new version number.
- 4.8. Course handbooks (including all editions) should be retained for each cohort of students for seven years post-graduation to ensure they are available in the event of any enquiry, complaint or appeal. This requirement applies to all course handbooks even if they are published in an alternative format.
- 4.9. Where it is straightforward to make archives available to students, for example, by providing a link to a page hosting previous versions of handbooks, these should be made available. In any case previous versions of handbooks should be available to students on request.

## **5. Information to be provided for all courses**

- 5.1. Annex A provides a detailed template for course handbooks. This incorporates content that was previously published in programme specifications and statements of provision which were discontinued with effect from the end of 2015-16.
- 5.2. The template is provided in a suggested order. Each section has a suggested heading and contents. A small number of sections include text which must be included in all course handbooks and others include suggested text or examples which a department may wish to consider including.
- 5.3. Information can be presented in a different order or format from that given in the template as long as all the content is included and the principles outlined in paragraph 4.3 are met.

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<sup>3</sup>[academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/new-courses](http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/new-courses)

- 5.4. Departments are free to add additional sections or content as they think appropriate to fit local requirements.

## **6. Review of this policy**

- 6.1. Education Policy Support, officers from the divisions and the Department for Continuing Education, and Oxford SU will review this policy on a biennial basis. The next review is due to take place during 2019-20.



## Annex A Course handbook template

This template sets the content which should be contained in all course handbooks. The order and format of the handbook is to be determined by individual departments. Additional sections may be added if felt to be useful.

	Section title	Description / <i>suggested text</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>Foreword</b>	
1.1	Statement of coverage	<p>Explain whom the course handbook is for. A handbook should be provided for each cohort of students (see paragraph 4.4).</p> <p>Include the following text:</p> <p><i>This handbook applies to students starting [the course in Michaelmas term [20XX]/Final Honour School in Michaelmas term [20xx]]. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.</i></p>
1.2	Version	<p>There should be a clear version numbering system in place, i.e. 1.0, 1.1 etc. where minor changes have been made; becoming 2.0 when a major change has been made (see paragraph 4.7). A list of any changes, noting the date of publication of each version, should be included.</p>
1.3	Disclaimer	<p>The following text should be included at the start of all handbooks. This wording must not be altered:</p> <p><i>The Examination Regulations relating to this course are available at (<u>insert course specific link</u>). If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations then you should follow the Examination Regulations. If you have any concerns please contact (<u>insert name at department and email address</u>).</i></p>

		<p><i>The information in this handbook is accurate as at [insert date of publication], however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at (insert link to relevant UG (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges">www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges</a>)/PG (<a href="http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges">www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges</a>) webpage). If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.</i></p>
1.4	List of contents	<p>A clear and complete contents page is essential, preferably divided into sections for increased clarity and legibility and with internal hyperlinks for navigation. If the course handbook is large, departments may also wish to consider including an index to the contents.</p>
1.5	Welcome/Introduction	<p>This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a welcome from the Head of Department and/or Course Director</li> <li>• a statement of the purpose of the handbook</li> <li>• links to other key sources of information: department website/WebLearn, Examination Regulations, Examination conventions, Oxford Students website, Student Handbook; also refer to College Handbooks which are available on College websites.</li> </ul>
1.6	Useful department contacts	<p>Consider including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• essential academic and support staff contact details</li> <li>• student representatives (or where to find the information)</li> <li>• departmental disability contact(s)</li> <li>• other useful contacts, e.g., IT Services, libraries, and department reception.</li> </ul> <p>For undergraduate joint courses (whether joint honours schools or courses taught across more than one department/faculty), this should include an administrative contact specific to the course, to act as an initial point of contact for students. This might be a specific administrator for the joint course; an administrator in one of the relevant departments/faculties who will triage queries as necessary; or a shared mailbox with a course-specific e-mail address.</p>
1.7	Buildings/Locations/Maps/ Access	-
1.8	Important dates	Dates of term, key assessment dates etc.

2	<b>The course content and structure</b> (where a handbook covers multiple courses, this section should be repeated for each course)	
2.1	Overview	<p>Give a summary of the different awards covered by the handbook. Include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• full title of the award, e.g., Master of Studies in History</li> <li>• FHEQ level and credit rating (where applicable), see the <i>University awards framework (UAF)</i> (<a href="http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/university-awards-framework">academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/university-awards-framework</a>)</li> <li>• title of the relevant subject benchmark statement (see <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements">www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements</a>)</li> <li>• the length of the course</li> <li>• details of professional accreditation (where applicable)</li> </ul>
2.2	Course aims	See Annex L of the <i>Policy and Guidance on new courses and major changes to courses</i> for guidance on writing course aims ( <a href="http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/new-courses">academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/new-courses</a> )
2.3	Intended learning outcomes	See Annex L of the <i>Policy and Guidance on new courses and major changes to courses</i> for guidance on writing intended course learning outcomes ( <a href="http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/new-courses">academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/new-courses</a> )
2.4	Course structure/description	<p>There should be a clear description of the overall structure of the course, year by year. Handbooks for FPE should include an overview of the structure of the whole course but may not include all the detail of the FHS. If course information included in an FHS Handbook is different to that provided in the FPE Handbook for that cohort previously, changes should be drawn to students' attention.</p> <p>For the specific years of the course the handbook covers the following should be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details of core and optional courses/papers</li> <li>• guidance on choosing options and where to go for further advice.</li> <li>• information on any other options available outside the course/department.</li> </ul> <p>Information should be provided showing how students will be exposed to current, research-informed teaching as well as provided with experience of a research environment. See paragraphs 6.1 to 6.5 of the <i>Policy and Guidance on UG learning and</i></p>

		<i>teaching</i> ( <a href="http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/ug-learning-and-teaching">academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/ug-learning-and-teaching</a> ) for further information.
2.5	Syllabus	Detailed syllabus information (teaching staff, learning aims, dates and times of lecturers/classes, synopses, reading lists) may be provided in the handbook, in a separate document, or on the department website/WebLearn (link).
<b>3</b>	<b>Teaching and learning</b>	
3.1	Organisation of teaching and learning	<p>Explain the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• role of the department in teaching and learning (lectures, seminars, practicals etc.)</li> <li>• role of the colleges in teaching and learning (including tutorials and role of the tutor for UG)</li> <li>• teaching patterns - explain the number of lectures or classes, the number of hours students are expected to spend in practicals, project work, or fieldwork; the normal tutorial pattern for the course or the year in question. Also give information on class sizes where applicable.</li> <li>• timetables or where to find timetable information</li> <li>• (PGT) the role of the supervisor (if general 'supervision' is offered beyond specific supervision on a dissertation or project).</li> </ul> <p>For undergraduate handbooks, a tabular representation of the recommended patterns of teaching (RPT) and a subject-specific statement about the purpose of tutorials for the course must be included. See Annex B for further information about presenting RPT, and see paragraphs 4.9 to 4.13 of the <i>Policy and Guidance on UG learning and teaching</i> (<a href="http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/ug-learning-and-teaching">academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/ug-learning-and-teaching</a>) for further information about the description of the purpose of tutorials.</p> <p>Include the following text:</p> <p><i>If you have any issues with teaching or supervision please raise these as soon as possible so that they can be addressed promptly. Details of who to contact are provided in section [x] complaints and appeals.</i></p>

3.2	Practicals (where applicable)	<p>Explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details of practicals and work required</li> <li>• health and safety in the laboratory</li> <li>• procedure for the submission of practical notebooks etc.</li> <li>• marking of practicals (link to assessment section) and what is regarded as satisfactory completion of practical work; consequences of unsatisfactory completion of practical work.</li> </ul>
3.3	Fieldwork (where applicable)	<p>Explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the structure and purpose of the activity/activities</li> <li>• whether compulsory/optional</li> <li>• the options available and how to select an option (if applicable)</li> <li>• the likely cost, or if there is a range of costs what that range is and why</li> <li>• sources of financial support</li> <li>• health and safety issues</li> <li>• how fieldwork relates to other course components (prior learning/contribution to examination)</li> </ul>
3.4	Placements/exchange (where applicable)	<p>Explain clearly what is on offer in terms of placements or exchange opportunities and where to find further information and guidance. For more guidance see the <i>Policy and Guidance on education with others</i> (<a href="http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/providing-education-with-others">academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/providing-education-with-others</a>).</p>
3.5	Projects/dissertation (where applicable)	<p>Explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the place of project/dissertation within the course</li> <li>• arrangements/procedures for choosing projects/dissertations</li> <li>• supervision arrangements (including to what extent supervisors will provide feedback on draft dissertations or other submitted work)</li> <li>• department-specific guidance for writing up the project/dissertation e.g. format, citation style, etc. or refer to guidance elsewhere.</li> </ul>
3.6	Expectations of study and student workload	<p>State that students are responsible for their own academic progress and explain what is expected of students in terms of their own study – e.g. hours spent in private study both during term and in the vacations – as well as in taught sessions. Information should be</p>

		<p>included regarding the balance between scheduled contact time and private study with indications provided about the typical and maximum amounts of work expected of students per week. You might include a description of a typical day or week, being clear that this is a guide only and that this will vary between different students. Information should be provided on how students should seek support in relation to unusually heavy workloads. See Section 3 of the <i>Policy and Guidance on UG learning and teaching</i> (<a href="http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/ug-learning-and-teaching">academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/ug-learning-and-teaching</a>).</p> <p>For undergraduate handbooks link to the guidance on paid work on the Oxford Students website (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/experience">www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/experience</a>).</p> <p>For graduate handbooks link to the <i>Paid work guidelines for Oxford graduate students</i> ().</p>
<b>4</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	
4.1	Assessment structure	<p>Set out the assessment strategy (why you assess the way you do) and structure of the course including the types and weighting of assessment for each part of the course. Provide a link to the relevant <i>Examination Regulations</i>.</p>
4.2	Feedback on learning and assessment	<p>Describe the opportunities offered for informal feedback. This might include reference to the purpose of tutorials (cross reference to the teaching and learning section above), peer interactions, interactions with department staff etc.</p> <p>Describe the opportunities offered for formative assessment. This might include an explanation of the role of: tutorial essays, college collections, in class problem sets, peer marking exercises, peer and lecturer feedback on in class presentations etc.</p> <p>Describe the opportunities offered for feedback on summative assessment. This might include an explanation of the role of: marks, generic feedback on cohort performance through examiner's reports, anonymised essays or exam answers used in marking exercises etc.</p> <p>Further guidance on writing this section can be found in the <i>Policy and Guidance on undergraduate learning and teaching</i> and the <i>Policy and Guidance on graduate taught courses</i> (<a href="http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/a-z-policies-guidance">academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/a-z-policies-guidance</a>) and the OLI resource</p>

		<p>'Formative assessment and feedback' (<a href="http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/support/teaching/resources/assess/">www.learning.ox.ac.uk/support/teaching/resources/assess/</a>)</p>
4.3	Examination conventions	<p>This section should include an explanation of examination conventions. The following suggested text might be included for this purpose.</p> <p><i>Examination conventions are the formal record of the specific assessment standards for the course or courses to which they apply. They set out how your examined work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of your award. They include information on: marking scales, marking and classification criteria, scaling of marks, progression, resits, use of viva voce examinations, penalties for late submission, and penalties for over-length work.</i></p> <p>The Examination conventions should be either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• linked to from this section;</li> <li>• included within this section; or</li> <li>• included as an annex to the handbook.</li> </ul> <p>If Examination conventions are provided by a link, this section should include a statement as to when and how the definitive version will be made available (noting the requirement in clause 8.1 of the <i>Regulations for the Conduct of University Examinations: Part 8</i> that 'The conventions (...) shall be published to prospective candidates not less than one whole term before the examination takes place or, where assessment takes place in the first term of a course, at the beginning of that term.' <a href="https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/Regulation?code=rftcoue-p8aocasopapetoexam">https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/Regulation?code=rftcoue-p8aocasopapetoexam</a>)</p> <p>If Examination conventions are included within the handbook, this section should include a statement as to whether they are definitive or may be revised prior to Examination, if the latter, information should also be given as to how students will be informed of the revised conventions.</p>
4.4	Good academic practice and avoiding plagiarism	<p>This section should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the University definition of plagiarism and link to the Oxford Student's website guidance on plagiarism (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism</a>)</li> </ul>

		<p><i>Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition.</i></p> <p><i>Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate subject specific advice on plagiarism, including a range of examples</li> <li>• specific guidance on academic good practice and topics such as time management, note-taking, referencing, research and library skills and information literacy and a link to the Oxford Students skills webpage (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills</a>)</li> <li>• include or refer to a style guide to inform students of good referencing practice</li> <li>• expectations regarding good academic practice for online open-book exams</li> </ul>
4.5	Entering for University examinations	Indicate subject-specific procedures to be followed, otherwise refer to the Oxford Students website for examination entry and alternative examination arrangements ( <a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams</a> ).
4.6	Examination dates	These should be provided or linked to where possible, or a provisional timetable included, or an indication when and where timetables are normally available. Refer also to the Oxford Students website ( <a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/timetables">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/timetables</a> )
4.7	Sitting your in-person examination	<p>Consider including the following suggested text:</p> <p><i>Practical information and support for sitting in-person exams is provided on the Oxford students website (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance</a>).</i></p> <p>Include in this section any subject specific policies students may particularly benefit from having their attention drawn to, e.g., with regard to calculators, statute books etc.</p>
4.8	Sitting your online examination	Consider including the following suggested text:



		<p>Online exams are taken in Inspira. You must familiarise yourself with the system prior to taking an online exam. There are a wide range of resources to help you on the Oxford Students website (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/online-exams">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/online-exams</a>).</p> <p>Online exams require you to adhere to the University's Honour Code (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/open-book/honour-code">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/open-book/honour-code</a>) and you should read this in advance of any online exams.</p> <p>Include in this section any subject specific policies students may particularly benefit from having their attention drawn to, e.g. expectations around use of resources in open-book exams, more detailed expectations/examples of referencing for open-book exams</p>
4.9	Submitted work	<p>Deadlines for submitted work should be provided or linked to – calendar date should always be included (alongside term/week/day if using).</p> <p>Consider including the following suggested text:</p> <p><i>All assessments will be submitted online via Inspira [replace if using another approved platform]. Ensure you are familiar with the online submission process in advance of any deadline. Full information is provided on the Oxford students website (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/submission">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/submission</a>).</i></p>
4.10	Problems completing your assessment	<p>Consider including the following suggested text:</p> <p><i>There are a number of University processes in place to help you if you find that illness or other personal circumstances are affecting your assessments or if you experience technical difficulties with an online exam or submission. Full information is available on the Oxford students website (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/problems-completing-your-assessment">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/problems-completing-your-assessment</a>).</i></p>
4.11	External examiner and Examiners' reports	<p>Provide the name, position and institution of the external examiners responsible for the course(s) covered by the handbook. Include the following statement:</p>

		<p><i>Students are strictly prohibited from contacting external examiners directly. If you are unhappy with an aspect of your assessment you may make a complaint or appeal (see page/section [x]).</i></p> <p>Provide a link to where students can access Examiners' reports (including the external examiner's reports) (as required by the <i>Examinations and Assessments Framework</i> sections 3.4 and 4.5 (<a href="http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/examiners">academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/examiners</a>))</p>
4.12	Prizes	Give details in handbooks or reference to other information sources. A central list of all prizes is at: <a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/prizes-and-awards">www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/prizes-and-awards</a> .
<b>5</b>	<b>Skills and learning development</b>	
5.1	Academic progress	<p>UG Handbooks should include an explanation of the division of responsibility between departments and colleges for monitoring academic progress (including the use of OxCORT). Cross-refer students to their college information.</p> <p>PGT handbooks should include details of who has overall responsibility for monitoring and reporting on student progress (including the use of GSS).</p> <p>This section should be clear on the extent to which it is appropriate for students to seek advice by email or in person from members of the department who are not directly involved in their teaching or supervision.</p>
5.2	Learning development and skills	<p>Explain how students are supported to develop as learners both in terms of academic and transferrable skills.</p> <p>This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a summary of the skills students are expected to develop – both academic and transferrable – through the course</li> <li>• existing sections of the course handbook related to 'how to study' or links to the same information provided in another document or webpage</li> <li>• details of specific skills training offered by the department or other services including libraries, language centre etc. of relevance to students.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any opportunities for peer mentoring, self-assessment, peer-assessment provided throughout the course</li> </ul>
5.3	Induction	Details of the induction programme for new students should either be included here, or if available in a separate document/website a link provided.
5.4	Opportunities for skills training and development	<p>Skills and other training opportunities offered by the department.</p> <p>This is particularly important for PGT handbooks and this section should also cover who is responsible for advising students as to which opportunities might be most suitable for them.</p> <p>Suggested text on central university resources:</p> <p><i>A wide range of information and training materials are available to help you develop your academic skills – including time management, research and library skills, referencing, revision skills and academic writing - through the Oxford Students website <a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills">http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills</a>.</i></p>
5.5	Opportunities to engage in the department research community (PGT only)	For PGT handbooks describe what opportunities are provided for students to take part in research seminars or groups, and what access is available to research funds.
5.6	Employability and careers information and advice	Explain what employability and careers-related activities are offered by the department or where to find more information and include a link to the relevant page on the Oxford Student website ( <a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/experience">www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/experience</a> ) and/or the University Careers Service ( <a href="http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk">www.careers.ox.ac.uk</a> ).
<b>6</b>	<b>Student representation, evaluation and feedback</b>	
6.1	Department representation	Explain the student representation system in the department including the process for selection of course representatives, the committee arrangements (JCC/GJCC or equivalent) and where further information, including course representative contact details, can be found (link to the department website or WebLearn).
6.2	Division and University representation	Consider including the following suggested text.

		<p><i>Student representatives sitting on the Divisional Board are selected through a process organised by the Oxford University Student Union (Oxford SU). Details can be found on the Oxford SU website along with information about student representation at the University level.</i></p> <p>Information on divisional consultative forums should be included where relevant.</p>
6.3	Opportunities to provide evaluation and feedback	<p>Explain how the department uses feedback from University wide surveys.</p> <p>Explain local feedback mechanisms in place – course evaluation questionnaires, open meetings, etc – and how the information is analysed and responded to.</p> <p>The following text should be included describing University wide feedback mechanisms.</p> <p><i>Students on full-time and part-time matriculated courses are surveyed once per year on all aspects of their course (learning, living, pastoral support, college) through the Student Barometer. Previous results can be viewed by students, staff and the general public at: <a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/student-engagement?wssl=1">www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/student-engagement?wssl=1</a></i></p> <p><i>Final year undergraduate students are surveyed instead through the National Student Survey. Results from previous NSS can be found at <a href="http://www.unistats.com">www.unistats.com</a>.</i></p>
<b>7</b>	<b>Student life and support</b>	
7.1	Who to contact for help	<p>Explain the roles of the department and colleges regarding academic and pastoral support.</p> <p>What, if anything, to do if you are ill or otherwise unable to attend departmental classes, lectures, practicals etc.</p> <p>For information relating to the wider university consider including the following text.</p>

		<p><i>Every college has their own systems of support for students, please refer to your College handbook or website for more information on who to contact and what support is available through your college.</i></p> <p><i>Details of the wide range of sources of support available more widely in the University are available from the Oxford Students website (<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare">www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare</a>), including in relation to mental and physical health and disability.</i></p>
7.2	Complaints and appeals	See Annex C for text to be included.
7.3	Student societies	Give details of relevant student societies at Oxford or to student membership of national subject bodies.
7.4	Policies and regulations	<p>Consider including the following suggested text.</p> <p><i>The University has a wide range of policies and regulations that apply to students. These are easily accessible through the A-Z of University regulations, codes of conduct and policies available on the Oxford Students website <a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/regulations/a-z">www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/regulations/a-z</a>.</i></p> <p>Here, or at an alternative location in the handbook, students' attention should be drawn to the <i>Policy on recording lectures by students</i> (located here: <a href="http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance">http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance</a>)</p>
<b>8</b>	<b>Facilities</b>	
8.1	Social spaces and facilities	i.e. cafes, common rooms etc.
8.2	Workspace	Particularly for PGT Handbooks
8.3	Libraries/museums	Introduction to the relevant library and museum facilities available.

8.4	IT	Clearly indicate what facilities and training are provided by the department (and if these are ancillary to other course activities or specially provided). Mention other sources such as IT Services.
8.5	Experimental facilities/laboratories (if applicable)	Location of laboratories or other experimental facilities and their abbreviations, access arrangements / restrictions (or link to further information)

## Annex B Recommended patterns of teaching (RPT) template

### Part 1: template

[COURSE TITLE]

[Course part]

[Course structure]

Paper	Term	Dept/ Faculty		College		Comments
		Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	
[1.]	MT					<i>Figures in this table are in hours unless otherwise stated.</i>
	HT					
	TT					
[2.]	MT					
	HT					
	TT					
[3.]	MT					
	HT					
	TT					
[4.]	MT					
	HT					
	TT					
[5.]	MT					
	HT					
	TT					
[6.]	MT					
	HT					
	TT					
[7.]	MT					
	HT					
	TT					

Paper	Term	Dept/ Faculty		College		Comments
		Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	
[8.]	MT					<i>Figures in this table are in hours unless otherwise stated.</i>
	HT					
	TT					
<u>Notes</u>						

## Part 2: Notes of guidance on using the RPT template

The template has been designed to give an ‘at a glance’ summary for students as part of their course handbooks, but also to be available to colleges when they are planning their teaching. The key information captured is the type and volume of teaching (focusing on lectures, classes and tutorials, but with the flexibility to include other forms of teaching such as practicals), the year and term in which it takes place and who provides it, department / faculty or college.

### Minimum set of information to be included:

- **Type of teaching provision:** lectures, classes, tutorials.
  - Practicals, data labs etc: number per term, pattern of occurrence (e.g. weekly, weeks 1-4 only)
  - project or dissertation/thesis supervision (number of tutorials/terms)
  - Revision classes
- **Provider<sup>4</sup> of teaching:** department/faculty, college
- **Amount of teaching:** how many hours per term
  - Where teaching is provided only in a specific term or order, this should be specified.
  - Where teaching can be provided in any term (in agreement with tutors/departamental advisors), this should be noted.
- A statement that indicates that colleges may, where appropriate, provide teaching in different quantities or formats than that presented in the table.

### Optional information:

- Details of who is responsible for allocation of tutorials, practical slots etc.
- Total number of courses/subjects/papers to be taken

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<sup>4</sup> For inter-collegiate classes and other similar arrangements, the provider in the RPT is the body perceived by the student as providing the taught provision, rather than the body funding that provision.



## Completing the table

**Course part** – Use a separate template for each part of the course, e.g. FPE, FHS Year 2, Part A.

**Course Structure** – this section can be used to give a brief overview of number of papers to be taken, any paper combination restrictions etc.

**Paper** – paper title and number (if numbered in the *Examination Regulations*)

**Term** – term in which the teaching takes place; if teaching only takes place for a particular paper in one or two terms, only include rows for those terms.

**Dept/Faculty / College Lectures / Classes / Tutorials** – Give the number of teaching sessions per term for each type of teaching. In the case of teaching provided by colleges, these figures are faculty/dept recommendations and individual colleges may choose to vary the pattern. NB: Lectures, classes and tutorials are assumed to be an hour in length unless otherwise noted.

**Comments** – use this column to add any additional information, particularly about college teaching for that paper, e.g. 4 classes on x, 4 classes on y, of the 8 tutorials students would normally only be expected to produce 4 essays, each class is 90 minutes long.

**Notes** – Use this section to add any necessary additional information, either for the whole table or for particular aspects (using \*, #, + as necessary).

For courses with practical work use this section to briefly describe the practical components e.g. 13 days practical work. The detail is expected to be covered for students elsewhere in their course handbook. Alternatively, practicals may be listed as a paper where this makes more sense for a given course.

**The Notes box may also be used to describe teaching patterns in circumstances where a narrative format can capture the relevant information more effectively or efficiently than adding rows of the table.** For example, on courses which have a large number of FHS optional papers with similar teaching patterns, expressing this as e.g. ‘*The recommended patterns of teaching for 3<sup>rd</sup> year optional papers is 12-16 lectures and 8 tutorials*’ rather than adding multiple rows of options listing identical teaching patterns, may be most effective.

**An appropriate statement, in the Notes section or above the table, should be included to recognise that colleges may provide different amounts or types of teaching than stated in the recommended patterns of teaching for a variety of reasons (e.g. individual student needs, differing numbers of contact hours depending on tutorial/class group sizes, etc).**

Adjust table layout as necessary: unnecessary columns/rows can be deleted i.e. if there are no faculty/college classes for any of the papers, or no teaching for a paper in a particular term. Add additional rows where required, including label rows if dividing by core/optional papers. Cells may be merged, for example where teaching provision is not clearly distinguished into specific terms or delivery formats.

## Annex C Complaints and appeals template

*[Revised June 2018 to reflect clarification in requirements for joint courses, for use in handbooks from 2018-19]*

### Complaints and academic appeals within the faculty/department of #C

The University, the [#Insert name] Division and the [#Insert name] faculty/department all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their course of study will result in no need for complaints (about that provision) or appeals (against the outcomes of any form of assessment).

Where such a need arises, an informal discussion with the person immediately responsible for the issue that you wish to complain about (and who may not be one of the individuals identified below) is often the simplest way to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Many sources of advice are available from colleges, faculties/departments and bodies like the Counselling Service or the Oxford SU Student Advice Service, which have extensive experience in advising students. You may wish to take advice from one of those sources before pursuing your complaint.

General areas of concern about provision affecting students as a whole should be raised through Joint Consultative Committees or via student representation on the faculty/department's committees.

### Complaints

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the faculty/department, then you should raise it with Director of Undergraduate Studies ([#Insert name]) or with the Director of Graduate Studies ([#Insert name]) as appropriate. **[For undergraduate joint courses (joint honours schools or courses taught across more than one department/faculty):** If your concern relates to the course as a whole, rather than to teaching or other provision made by one of the faculties/departments, you should raise it with ([#Insert appropriate contact name, e.g. Chair of the relevant Joint Standing Committee for the course])). Complaints about departmental facilities should be made to the Departmental administrator ([#Insert name]). If you feel unable to approach one of those individuals, you may contact the Head of Department/Faculty ([Insert Name]). The officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the Proctors under the University Student Complaints Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by your college, you should raise it either with your tutor or with one of the college officers, Senior Tutor, Tutor for Graduates (as appropriate). Your college will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

## **Academic appeals**

An academic appeal is an appeal against the decision of an academic body (e.g. boards of examiners, transfer and confirmation decisions etc.), on grounds such as procedural error or evidence of bias. There is no right of appeal against academic judgement.

If you have any concerns about your assessment process or outcome it is advisable to discuss these first informally with your subject or college tutor, Senior Tutor, course director, director of studies, supervisor or college or departmental administrator as appropriate. They will be able to explain the assessment process that was undertaken and may be able to address your concerns. Queries must not be raised directly with the examiners.

If you still have concerns you can make a formal appeal to the Proctors who will consider appeals under the University Academic Appeals Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).