



# **Policy and Guidance on new courses and major changes to courses (including closure)**

**Education Committee**

**Valid from Trinity Term 2015 and fully implemented from  
Michaelmas Term 2015**

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## Version history

1.0	March 2015	Original publication	Approved by Quality Assurance Subcommittee
1.1	September 2015	Minor updates	Minor text corrections and policy change to Annex I: Vested interests. Approved by PVC (Education).
1.2	September 2016	Minor updates and new Annex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Main document</i>: New paragraph 7.35 on course changes after Education Committee approval.</li> <li>• <i>Annex A</i>: section 3 additional guidance on accreditation information; section 14 new requirement to specify form of matriculation for part-time and distance learning courses; section 15 new requirement to consult Exams and Assessments team.</li> <li>• <i>Annex H</i>: new guidance on delegated responsibility and roles in the approval of changes to the <i>Examination Regulations</i>.</li> <li>• <i>*New* Annex M</i>: Proposal for a part-time variant of a full time postgraduate course.</li> </ul> Approved on behalf of the PVC (Education).
1.3	January 2017	New version of Annex G	<i>Annex G</i> : replaced with revised fee justification form as issued by PRAS in December 2016. NB Footer on Annex G and P&G amended to read 'version 1.3 (January 2017)'. Footers on other annexes unchanged.
2.1	July 2017		<i>Main document</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insertion of reference to new framework for the planning of new courses in para 1.17. Further details in Annex O.</li> <li>• New footnote on para 7.17 emphasising the importance of engagement with Student Registry.</li> <li>• New para 7.32 requiring new courses to have identified at least three colleges willing to admit students.</li> </ul> <i>Annexes</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annex A: minor amendments plus updating of the material relating to students who will require to take examinations under old regulations, and addition of a requirement to confirm consultation with Student Registry.</li> <li>• Annex D: changes to the Graduate Committee cover sheet made at the request of the chair of Graduate Committee.</li> <li>• Annex G: replaced with 2019-20 version of the fee justification form.</li> <li>• Annex H: changes to reflect EdC standing orders agreed HT17 and the addition of Annex N to the <i>P&amp;G</i>.</li> <li>• Annex I: clarification that fundamental changes cannot be made less than three months before the start of a course, and changes to reflect the addition of Annex N to the <i>P&amp;G</i>.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition of Annex N which had previously been published as officers' guidance.</li> <li>• Addition of Annex O which describes framework for the planning of new courses from 2017-18 onwards.</li> </ul> <p>Approved by the PVC (Education).</p>
2.2	January 2019	New version of Annex G	<i>Annex G</i> : replaced with revised fee justification form as issued by PRAS in December 2018.



## **1. Background**

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

- undergraduate and taught postgraduate course structure and curriculum design;
- teaching, learning and assessment;
- structure of doctoral programmes; and
- approval of new courses.

(Council Regulations 15 of 2002, Section 2.3 (c), (d) (e) and (f)).

1.2. This document sets out Education Committee's policy on and guidance for the introduction of new courses and major changes to courses at all levels. It provides an overarching framework within which divisions, faculties and departments are expected to develop new courses and propose major changes, establishing their own related policy and guidance where appropriate.

1.3. It builds on the University's overarching statement of educational policy contained within the Strategic Plan and incorporates sector expectations in the form of the UK Quality Code, in particular *Part A: Academic Standards, Chapter B1: Programme design, development and approval* and *Part C: Information about higher education provision*.

1.4. Proposals involving collaboration or partnership with other organisations, including the provision of placements, should also take into account the requirements of the *Policy and Guidance on education with others*.

## **2. Scope**

2.1. This document covers the proposal of new courses or major changes for all levels of award: undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research.

2.2. A major change is considered to be anything which impacts the overall aims of the programme or the way in which it is delivered. This could include for example, a significant reworking or shift in the balance of course content or the introduction of a new mode of study i.e. part-time<sup>1</sup> or distance learning. If there is any doubt as to whether a change constitutes a major change contact should be made with Education Policy Support for advice early in the development process.<sup>2</sup>

2.3. Education Committee engages directly with the approval of new courses and major changes to courses; minor changes to courses, including the addition or removal of specific 'option' papers, can be approved by departments/faculties through their own deliberative structures or by referral to divisions. Education Committee expects

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<sup>1</sup> Occasionally it may be appropriate to offer a part-time variant of a postgraduate research programme on a one-off basis to meet the needs of a particular candidate. In these circumstances proposals will not be required to go through the full approval process and proposers should instead complete Annex J *Proposal for a limited entry part-time DPhil*.

<sup>2</sup> Further guidance on the categorisation of changes, and the resulting level of approval required, is provided in Annex N *Guidance note on types of course changes*.

divisions to provide guidance to their departments and faculties as to what type of changes may be approved at a local level and what require referral on to the division for consideration. Individuals wishing to propose minor changes to courses should refer to their divisional guidance not this document. When approving minor changes divisions should be mindful of the cumulative impact of changes on the aims of the course or the overall way it is delivered. Where a series of minor changes may have had the cumulative impact of a major change, divisions should consider undertaking a course review to ensure the course as a whole remains coherent.

- 2.4. Occasionally departments or faculties may wish to make a change to a course which, while minor in impact in relation to the overall aims or content of the programme, represents a significant innovation in current practice in relation to teaching, learning or assessment, or a departure from the expectations of the *Policy and Guidance on undergraduate learning and teaching* or the *Policy and Guidance on postgraduate taught courses*. Departments and faculties should bring forward proposals for this type of change through the division to Education Committee's Taught Degrees Panel for consideration.

### **3. Aim**

- 3.1. The guidance for the development of new courses and major changes is designed to ensure that the following have been considered:
- the academic case for expansion or change in the subject and category concerned including fit with the department/faculty, division and University strategy and priorities;
  - the potential of the course to attract high quality students in sufficient numbers to ensure the viability of the programme;
  - the availability of supervisors and appropriate departmental and central facilities and support (IT, library and subject-specific resources);
  - the ability of the faculty/department to provide appropriate organisational support;
  - the capacity of the collegiate University to meet the students' wider support needs;
  - the financial implications for the department or faculty and the wider University community;
  - the level of risk involved in each course proposal, including the means proposed for its delivery, and the required level of resource necessary to ensure that the required outcomes of the new course can be achieved;
  - the views of students;
  - the views of an external subject specialist and, where relevant, a sector or industry professional; and
  - the views of other departments which might be involved in or affected by the introduction of the course.
- 3.2. The guidance is also intended to ensure that the programme:
- is academically sound, with clear aims and learning outcomes and a teaching and assessment methodology which supports those aims;
  - is aligned with:

- the *University awards framework* (and consequently the qualification descriptors set out in the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ));
- the relevant subject benchmark statement;
- any specific requirements set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies; and
- is designed inclusively to take into account the needs of a diverse student body.

#### **4. Internal reference points**

4.1. For any new course or major change Education Committee expects the course team to engage with key internal reference points, these include:

- *University awards framework*
- *Policy and Guidance on undergraduate learning and teaching*
- *Policy and Guidance on postgraduate taught courses*
- *Policy on research degrees*
- *Policy and Guidance for Examiners and others involved in University Examinations*
- *Policy and Guidance on providing education with others*
- *Policy framework for part-time graduate provision*

#### **5. Key course documents**

5.1. The final outcome of the approval process is a set of key documents for the course – the *Examination Regulations*, the Examination conventions and the Course handbook. These are used by staff to organise the delivery of the course and by students as the source of accurate information about how they are to be taught, what they are expected to learn, and how they will be assessed. These course documents are drafted as part of the course development process.

#### **6. Vested interests**

6.1. When staff are considering any change to a course they must be mindful of the impact that this change might have on students already studying for the award. Except in very specific circumstances changes should not be made which would impact on students who have already begun to work towards an assessment. Changes may be considered to later parts of a course on to which students have already enrolled, but not yet begun working towards assessment. More detailed advice and guidance on managing vested interests in course change are available in Annex I, while Annex N provides further guidance on types of course change.

#### **7. Process for the development and approval of new courses and major changes**

##### **Overview**

7.1. The process of development and approval of new courses and major changes consists of three stages. Proposals will go through all three stages. From 2017-18 onwards, there is a further preliminary stage (Stage 0) for new course proposals. The diagram



on page 5 illustrates Stages 1 to 3. Detailed information about Stage 0 is provided in Annex O<sup>3</sup>.

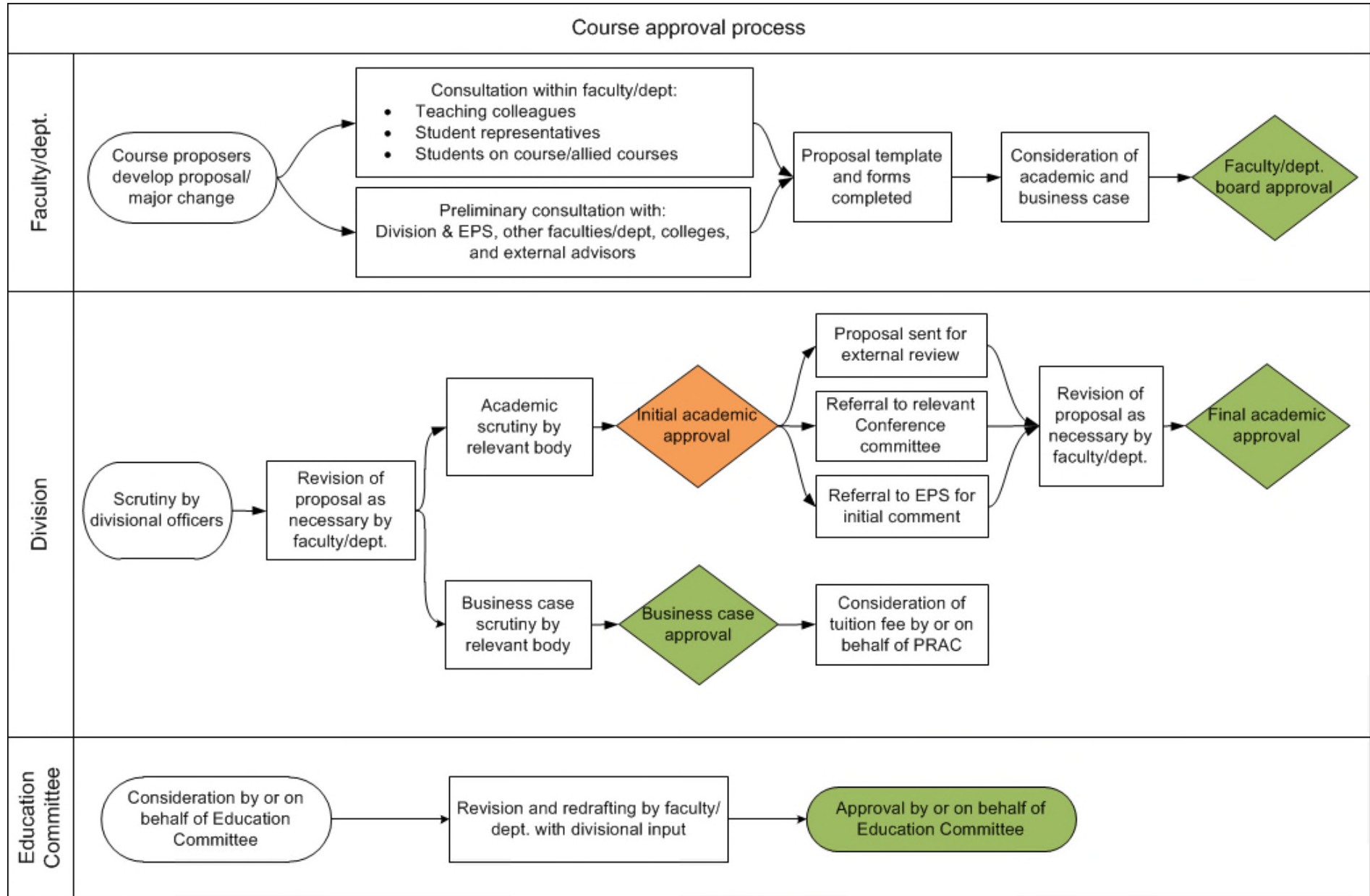
- 7.2. **Stage 1: Within the department/faculty** – this is where the original idea for a new course or major change to an existing course originates. The detailed proposal is developed and consulted on locally with teaching colleagues and students. Initial feedback from existing key contacts is also sought at this stage including the division, Education Policy Support. Colleges are approached with regard to their potential interest to offer student places.
- 7.3. **Stage 2: Scrutiny by the division** – through its officers and the relevant boards and committees the division undertakes a formal scrutiny process for the proposal. The division will seek a formal review of the proposal from an external subject expert, the relevant committee of Conference of Colleges, Education Policy Support, and seek approval of the proposal's tuition fees by or on behalf of Planning and Resources Committee. When given final approval by Divisional Board the proposal is recommended to Education Committee for consideration.
- 7.4. **Stage 3: Scrutiny by or on behalf of Education Committee** – proposers will be normally be invited to attend the meeting of Education Committee at which the proposal is discussed. Proposals will, however, be reviewed on behalf of Education Committee by relevant officers and depending on the nature of the change, they may approve the proposal on behalf of the committee or refer it to the PVC (Education) acting on behalf of the committee for a decision, rather than refer it for full consideration by the committee.

### **Timescales**

- 7.5. New undergraduate courses will need to have secured final approval (completed Stage 3) by the end of Trinity Term two years prior to when they will be advertised for entry i.e. Trinity Term 2015 for entry in Autumn 2017.
- 7.6. New postgraduate courses will need to have secured final approval (completed Stage 3) by the end of Trinity Term in the academic year prior to when they will be advertised for entry i.e. Trinity Term 2015 for entry in Autumn 2016.
- 7.7. In addition to the development time within the department or faculty (which will vary significantly from proposal to proposal) for all new courses and major changes, proposers should aim to allow at least two terms for scrutiny by division (this stage includes the referral to the relevant committee of Conference of Colleges which will be particularly detailed in relation to undergraduate courses) and at least one term for scrutiny by Education Committee.
- 7.8. Major changes which are specific in scope – i.e. introducing a part time variant to an existing course with no other changes – may take less time to achieve approval.
- 7.9. Changes may be introduced for existing cohorts subject to consideration of vested interests (see Section 6).

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<sup>3</sup> A review of the preliminary Stage 0 will be conducted in the course of 2019-20.



## **Stage 1: Department/Faculty stage**

### ***Developing the course proposal***

- 7.10. A template for new courses proposals is included as Annex A. The template consists of a series of headings followed by guidance on what is expected to be included in each section. A special template for part-time versions of a full time postgraduate courses is included as Annex M. Proposers may also wish to consult the *Suggested questions for divisional bodies undertaking course scrutiny* (Annex C) to ensure that their proposal comprehensively addresses the key questions which divisional bodies will be seeking to answer when reviewing the proposal.
- 7.11. This template should also be used for proposals for major changes but not all sections will be relevant for all proposals in this case. Proposers should seek advice from divisional officers if they are unsure which sections need to be completed for a particular proposal.
- 7.12. Once they have secured initial support to develop the proposal within their department or faculty, proposers are strongly encouraged to make early contact with their division and Education Policy Support, who will be able to give an early view on the proposal and areas that are likely to require detailed attention.

### ***Student consultation***

- 7.13. The involvement of students in course design and development is now considered best practice across the higher education sector and should take place in the development of all new courses or major changes.
- 7.14. Students can be involved in the development process in a variety of ways:
- analysis of existing student feedback on course design and content;
  - a specific questionnaire or focus group seeking comment on a proposal from students; currently on course (for major changes) or in a cognate area (for new courses); and
  - discussion with student representatives either through a specific meeting and/or existing consultative mechanisms such as the JCC/GCC.
- 7.15. Consultation undertaken, feedback received and its impact on the development of the proposal should be discussed in the proposal document.

### ***Wider internal consultation***

- 7.16. At the early stage of course design or change there can be significant value on drawing on a wide range of external sources of advice. In this context 'external' means both from outside of the faculty/department and outside of the University as both can bring valuable insight during the development process.
- 7.17. Proposers will need to engage with:
- academic staff in cognate areas from the wider University who may have an interest in the proposal;

- professional staff such as those in library, technology, disability and equality services and those in Student Registry<sup>3</sup>;
- colleges, to identify those willing to offer places to students<sup>4</sup> and for undergraduate programmes also to initiate discussions regarding tutorial provision;
- colleagues from other institutions offering similar courses to look at practice across the sector;
- contacts from academic subject associations, and sector networks;
- contacts made through research collaborations, industrial or professional partnerships, or other academic partnerships;
- employers or relevant community organisations, either through existing advisory bodies, the Careers Service or directly;
- current external examiners; and
- representatives of professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (even if the programme is not intending to seek accreditation);

7.18. Consultation undertaken, feedback received and its impact on the development of the proposal should be discussed in the proposal document.

7.19. Departments and faculties should also consider at this point who they would wish to nominate to provide formal external review at the division level scrutiny stage.

### ***Department/faculty approval***

7.20. The department/faculty is responsible for undertaking a comprehensive examination of the proposal and both academic and financial grounds.

7.21. Approval by department/faculty committee indicates that:

- the paperwork is complete (full proposal, supporting documentation and forms);
- the course is academically sound, can be well resourced and fits strategically with the plans of the department/faculty; and
- the business case is sound and the course is financially sustainable; and
- consultation with students, external advisors, other relevant departments/faculties and internal services has been undertaken and the feedback received has been incorporated into the proposal.

### **Stage 2: Division level scrutiny stage**

7.22. The division is responsible for undertaking comprehensive detailed scrutiny of proposals. The bodies that undertake this scrutiny will vary depending on the governance structure of each division. Divisions may wish to create their own process map of the division stage identifying the key responsible bodies within their own division.

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<sup>3</sup> Discussions with Student Registry are particularly important in relation to courses of unusual structures or where a reorganisation of existing programmes is contemplated.

<sup>4</sup> This is different to the consultation with the relevant Conference of Colleges committee on the course proposal itself as described in section 7.28.

7.23. To assist divisional bodies in this scrutiny process a suggested set of questions to be considered is provided as Annex C.

### ***Review by officers***

7.24. Paperwork will initially be reviewed by officers to check that it is complete and of sufficient quality to allow for rigorous scrutiny.

7.25. Officers will begin the process of arranging for:

- an external subject specialist (and where relevant also a sector professional) based on nominations from the department or faculty, to comment on the proposal following initial academic approval (see Annex E *Nomination form for an external reviewer for a new course or major change*); and
- the proposal to be considered at Senior Tutors' Committee or Graduate Committee of Conference (as appropriate).

### ***Academic approval***

7.26. The proposal will be scrutinised by the relevant academic body within the division who may suggest revisions of the proposal prior to seeking comments from the external reviewer, the relevant committee of the Conference of Colleges and Education Policy Support.

### ***External review***

7.27. Once any revisions have been undertaken, officers will send out the proposal for external review. All proposals will require comment from an external subject specialist and for those courses that relate directly to a particular profession or industry comment from a senior member of that profession or industry should also be sought. This forms a key part of scrutiny as it allows divisions to access the subject and professional expertise necessary to assure themselves that the proposal meets the expectations for course content and standards in the subject area.

### ***Consideration by Conference of Colleges***

7.28. For undergraduate courses officers will send out the full proposal to Senior Tutors' Committee for consideration. For graduate courses officers will send the full proposal and cover sheet (provided as Annex D) to Conference's Graduate Committee for information and comment.

7.29. Departments and faculties will respond to the external and college comment and submit a revised proposal to the relevant academic body for final approval.

### ***Business case and planning approval***

7.30. The appropriate body will consider the business case for the proposal and sign off on the proposed student numbers and tuition fees before submitting the latter for consideration by or on behalf of Planning and Resource Allocation Committee.

### ***Division approval***

7.31. Final approval by relevant divisional body indicates that:

- the course is academically sound, can be well resourced and fits strategically with the plans of the division;
- consultation with students, external advisors, other relevant departments/faculties and internal services (including the libraries and Student Registry) has been undertaken and incorporated;
- formal external comment has been received and if necessary acted upon;
- the proposal has been reviewed by the relevant committee of the Conference of Colleges;
- the proposal has been reviewed by Education Policy Support; and
- approval with regard to student tuition fees has been received from PRAC.

7.32. Proposals for new courses should not be referred up from divisions for final approval by, or on behalf of, Education Committee unless at least three colleges have been identified<sup>5</sup> as willing to admit students on the new course. Exceptions may be permitted in cases where a single college has agreed to admit all students on a particular course.

### **Stage 3: Education Committee scrutiny stage**

7.33. Education Committee, or those acting on its behalf, will receive:

- the minute/report from the approving divisional body; and
- full proposal and supporting documentation (including external comment and comment from the relevant Conference of Colleges committee).

7.34. Education Committee will seek to satisfy itself that the guidance provided on the development of new courses or major changes has been followed and the key points for consideration given in section 3 above have been covered, but particularly will take a view on:

- the strategic fit of the proposed course or major change with the strategic priorities and policies of the University; and
- the coherence of the proposed course or major change with the educational character of the University.

7.35. Education Committee may refer the proposal back for further development if the Committee is not satisfied, or it may approve the proposal with or without conditions.

7.36. Once final Education Committee approval has been given there should be no changes to the course as approved prior to the first intake of the course (with the exception of Type 1 changes as detailed in *Annex I: Vested Interests*).

## **8. Post-approval process**

8.1. See Annex K for guidance on tasks to be completed once a new course or major changes has been approved.

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<sup>5</sup> See section 7.17 for engagement with colleges to identify those willing to accept students on a proposed new course.

## **9. Monitoring and review of approved courses**

- 9.1. Education Committee may approve a course for a specified period, or give approval provided that a review takes place within a given time period. Otherwise all new courses should be reviewed by the division after the first five years of operation.

## **10. Course closure**

- 10.1. Where a faculty or department and the responsible division have decided that a course should be discontinued they should submit a proposal for closure for the approval of the Education Committee.

- 10.2. The proposal should cover the:

- reasons for the proposed closure and the steps taken to reach that conclusion;
- projected impact on resources (academic staff, administrative staff and facilities);
- plans in place to ensure the quality of the learning experience of students currently on the course is maintained once recruitment is ceased; and
- plans to manage the impact on students currently in the application cycle.

- 10.3. Any consideration of potential closure of an undergraduate course should be brought to the attention of the division, Education Policy Support and Senior Tutors' Committee at the earliest possible opportunity and will need to take into account the timelines relating to the production of the University prospectus etc.

## **11. Monitoring and review of the process**

- 10.4. Education Policy Support and officers from the divisions and the Department for Continuing Education will review the process on a biennial basis, drawing on lessons learned from the process of approving new courses or major changes since the last review.

- 10.5. The next review of the process, and subsequently of this document, is due to take place during 2018-19.

## Annex A

### Proposal for a new course/major change to an existing course

N.B. Not all sections, or elements of each section will be relevant for proposals for major changes. This will depend very much on the nature of the change proposed. For example, for changes involving major curricula reshaping almost all sections may be relevant, but for changes to a specific element or aspect of a course proposers should focus on the sections where the change is likely to have **impact**. Proposers should be careful to **describe** both the substance of change and **explain** the reasoning behind it.

Proposals for part-time programmes (whether offered only part-time or part-time variants of existing full time programmes) must specifically tackle the points raised in the *Part-time policy framework for graduate provision* under the appropriate headings below.

#### 1. Academic grounds

Explain the academic grounds for the new course/major change. This might include:

- a summary of the proposed course or change including an outline of its content and its aims;
- the context and reasons for proposing the new course or making the change at this time;
- how the proposed course or revision relates to existing provision, within the University and elsewhere; and
- the strategic fit of the new or revised programme within department/faculty, division and university.

#### 2. Evidence of demand

Provide internal or external evidence of the anticipated demand for the new (or revised) course. As far as possible, this should be quantifiable and go beyond the anecdotal. Consultation with students and the relevant admissions office should take place and be incorporated, as should consultation with the Careers Service (where relevant).

This section might include:

- an explanation of whom the programme is intended to attract;
- benchmarking against what is offered at competitor institutions (how does the course compare in content/style/duration, how many students apply, what kind of fees do they attract);
- an explanation of what would attract students to this course at Oxford over other offerings at the University or elsewhere; and
- an exploration of what considerations there are in relation to widening participation and equality and diversity. This might include an exploration of protected characteristics and other key demographic factors in the intended applicant pool.

#### 3. Course design

Proposers should ensure they are familiar with the following key internal reference points for course design: *Policy and Guidance on undergraduate learning and teaching* and *Policy and Guidance on postgraduate taught courses*



This section should include:

- outline information about the new course content and structure including the learning outcomes of the course (learning outcomes are statements that describe what a student will know, understand and be able to do as a result of learning in the context of the course). For proposals involving changes to course content and structure explain the context for the changes and why the specific proposals are being put forward. More detailed information should be attached to the proposal in the format of part of the draft Course Handbook;
- mapping of the proposed course against the *University awards framework*, the level and qualification descriptors in the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), the relevant subject benchmark statements and professional body or accreditation requirements (when relevant);
- description and explanation of any patterns of delivery outside the normal 8 week/3 term structure, including part-time and distance learning; and
- how the course has been designed to take into account the needs of a diverse range of learners and address obligations relating to inclusivity, equality and diversity (see immediately below).

Under the Equality Act 2010, the University has a legal duty to avoid policies, practices and criteria that would put students with a range of ‘protected characteristics’ at a disadvantage. These are: race (encompassing ethnicity, nationality, and national origin), sex, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, disability, religion or belief, and age. For disabled students, the Act also establishes an ‘anticipatory duty’ to make adjustments to policies, practices and criteria that might foreseeably disadvantage such students.

The process of designing a new course or making major changes to an existing course is an opportunity to put in place curricula, teaching and assessment methods that are as inclusive as possible, for disabled students but also other groups with potentially different learning needs or part-time students.

For postgraduate research (PGR) courses use this section to describe the particular focus and approach of the course.

For courses which are or will be seeking recognition from a professional, statutory or regulatory body, or any other form of accreditation, the brief description of the accreditation process should be included here.

#### **4. Teaching methods (UG & PGT)/Training and supervisory arrangements (PGR)**

Proposers should ensure they are familiar with the following key internal reference points: *Policy and Guidance on undergraduate learning and teaching*, *Policy and Guidance on postgraduate taught courses*, *Policy on research degrees*.

All undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate taught (PGT) proposals should include a description of the teaching methods for the course and an explanation for the proposed balance between different teaching methods i.e. lectures, tutorials, classes or seminars, and laboratory or fieldwork, and how this supports the aims and learning outcomes of the course.

For a new joint course this section should include the arrangements for the co-ordination of tutorial arrangements and mechanisms for co-ordinated oversight.

For PGR courses this section should include a detailed description of the way the taught or subject specific training aspects of the programme are delivered (excluding generic skills training, covered below) and the supervisory arrangements which will be in place. For proposals for part-time DPhils describe the provision for the support of supervisors in the longer-term commitment required in supervising part-time students.

## **5. Assessment methods (UG & PGT)/Progression and assessment (PGR)**

For UG courses, proposers should ensure that they are familiar with the requirements of the section on 'Examinations and Assessments' in the *Policy and Guidance on undergraduate learning and teaching*. For PGT and PGR proposals, the relevant sections of the *Policy and Guidance on postgraduate taught courses* and the *Policy on research degree* should be referred to.

For all taught courses, proposers should ensure that they are familiar with the requirements of section 1.2 (the 'The University's approach to assessment') and Annex E ('Good practice guide to assessment design') in the *Policy and Guidance for Examiners*.

For PGR courses this section should cover the arrangements for transfer and confirmation of status and arrangements for final assessment of the thesis.

Proposals for taught courses should include a detailed description of the proposed assessment methods involved in the course, and explain:

- why the particular assessment methods have been chosen over other forms of assessment;
- how the assessment methods relate to the content and learning outcomes of the course;
- the balance of assessment across the duration of the course;
- how considerations relating to inclusive and alternative assessment have influenced the assessment design;
- how the assessment has been designed to minimise plagiarism and other forms of cheating (see Annex B of the *Policy and Guidance*);
- for courses involving dissertations, extended essays, project work and other examined assignments, proposals should include a statement describing the appropriate role of the tutor or supervisor(s).

A sample or specimen exam papers should be included for the new UG courses or options.

## **6. Examination arrangements and resources**

Describe and quantify the examining resources required for the new course or new options or modes of assessment in existing courses and explain where those examining resources will be drawn from.

Proposals for which only one examiner is available will not be approved by the Education Committee. Proposals which rely on only two examiners will be approved by the Education Committee only in exceptional circumstances.

All PGT courses and final honour schools should have at least one external examiner and in larger courses there should be more than one external to cover the full breadth of the examination; in joint honour schools each panel of examiners, drawn from the parent school, should include at least one external.

*Special arrangements for students who will require to take a course under old regulations*

If a student's normal course of study for an examination has been extended on account of illness or other good cause, students are entitled to take the course under the regulations that originally applied to them within prescribed limits (category A). These are:

- For FHS candidates, within six terms of the original assessment date;
- For FPE candidates, within three terms of the original assessment date;
- For PGT students, so long as the time elapsed since they were originally due to be examined is not greater than the maximum time permitted for completion of their course.

A student who is admitted to be examined outside the prescribed limits (category B) shall normally be examined in accordance with the regulations which apply currently.

Indicate what special arrangements would be made for the candidates in category A and B (having consulted examiners as necessary). Where the arrangements proposed do not involve the normal procedure, as set out above, a detailed description should be provided.

## **7. Learning development and skills training (UG)/skills training (PGT/PGR)**

For UG courses, proposals should indicate the different types of study skills and subject-specific skills that students will need to develop across the duration of their course, and the main providers for those skills (reference should be made to the relevant section of the Course handbook).

For PG courses, the course proposal should indicate the arrangements in place for skills training for PG students.

### *IT skills*

Indicate any IT competencies that should have been attained by the end of the course, with an indication of the provision which will be made available to promote their achievement.

### *Language teaching*

For any programme incorporating foreign language competency the Language Centre should be consulted and can advise on scoping the extra teaching load required, methods of assessment etc. The outcome of that discussion should be given here and an explanation of how the language provision fits with the overall course aims and design.

## **8. Employability**

Describe and explain the approach taken to the embedding of employability within the design of the course – both within the curriculum and activities specific to the course which sit outside of the curriculum.

Proposers might find it helpful to have the views of employers at an early stage in the process of course revision/development, and may wish to seek comment and support from the Careers Service

## **9. Recruitment and admissions**

Describe and explain the criteria for admission to the course (the GAF Course Page Template can be used to guide what information should be included in this section).

Consideration should be given to whether the course will allow international students (non-EEA nationals) to obtain the correct immigration permission to be able to study in the UK. This will relate the following factors:

- course delivery – full time, part-time, distance learning or online courses;
- duration of course and residency in Oxford; and
- the aim of the qualification;

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they hold the correct immigration permission. However, if the course structure means they will not be eligible for a Tier 4 Student visa the visa options could be more limited and this should be explained in advance through the course marketing material and offer letter.

For major changes to existing courses, the same criteria should be applied. The Student Immigration team can provide further clarification on immigration aspects for a new or existing course.

## **10. Student numbers**

The proposal documentation should set out the proposed cohort size for the course, including any proposed changes in cohort size during the first few years of the course's operation. By the time the proposal documentation reaches Education Committee, detail should be included about:

- whether the student numbers for the proposed course are already included in the division's SNP figures as submitted to PRAS in the most recent planning round, or, if not
- the division's plan for accommodating the student numbers for the proposed course within its current agreed SNP figures (e.g. by viring the numbers from other courses).

For a new course the outcome of the initial discussion with individual colleges regarding interest in offering places for the course should be included in this section.

## **11. Tuition fees and additional course costs**

The *Justification for proposed University Fee form* (available as Annex G of the *Policy and Guidance*) should be completed, giving the level of university fee proposed and the justification for this, in the light of benchmarking, the departmental business case, and admissions, on which relevant information should be given on the form as indicated. The form should be submitted to PRAS once it has been considered by the division.

Indicate on the form whether there are any course-related costs that fall on students (over and above University fees and any college fees). Where this is the case, the department and

division are encouraged to consider whether these costs, especially where they relate to compulsory course elements, could be absorbed into the fees that are payable, and/or what support is available to help cover these costs so as to ensure that no student is unable to participate due to lack of funds. Where costs do fall on students, please provide a statement covering the following, for publication on the University website for the information of applicants:

- whether the purpose identified is compulsory or optional;
- the cost, or range of costs, estimated to fall on students for course-related purposes (over and above University fees and any college fees);
- the support available to all students on the course (where relevant); and
- discretionary funds available from the department, trust funds, colleges or other sources, with an indication of the grounds on which such support may be available (e.g. means-tested).

Under the University Statutes, 'No member of the University shall be required to pay any fee or other charge (except one required by way of penalty or fine imposed under the authority of a statute or regulation) unless it is required by statute or regulation' (Statute II, section 3(2)).

## **12. Facilities and other physical resources**

Where the new course involves additional student numbers, or where a change may have an impact on space and facilities, describe the proposed accommodation for students on the course, in particular:

- study or working space
- library provision (including space, books and other learning resources)
- laboratory provision (where relevant)
- access to specialist facilities
- common room provision;
- opportunities to work with staff and other graduate students (for PG courses);

Also, detail any other resources implications of the new or amended course, including IT, specialist equipment, accommodation or regular requirement for special tuition.

## **13. Teaching resources**

In relation to both new courses and significant new options or other changes in existing courses, the following should be addressed.

- How will the new or altered teaching be provided?
- Have those expected to supply such teaching been consulted and indicated their willingness and availability to do so in the timescales which are proposed?
- Will it be necessary to make any adjustments in other parts of the course or syllabus in order to release teaching resources for the proposed new course or option?
- Will existing provision have to be given up in order to allow the new course or new option to be offered?
- Are there any implications for the availability of resources for other courses within the division?

- Are there sufficient resources to allow for programmed absences i.e. as a result of sabbatical leave? How will unanticipated absences be addressed?

For major changes to UG courses, there are likely to be implications for tutorial teaching and so Senior Tutors' Committee will have a significant interest in the proposal. Early discussions with colleges, as the proposal is developed, should be undertaken. (This is in addition to consultation with the relevant Conference committee during the divisional approval stage.)

This section should clearly explain the potential impact of any proposed change on tutorial provision requirements.

Questions which colleges are likely to consider in relation to a new or amended UG course include:

- Is the college likely to admit students to the proposed course?
- Does the college consider that it has sufficient resources to provide tutorial teaching, including specialist teaching?
- Does the college consider that it can provide the necessary framework for organisational oversight of each student's studies in the proposed course?
- Does the college consider that tutorial teaching and departmental teaching will be satisfactorily integrated?

#### **14. Course organisation, administration and oversight**

Identify the course leadership and the body (e.g. organising committee, standing committee) that will be responsible for organising and supervising the new course and detail its:

- composition (including student representation); and
- reporting lines to the relevant faculty/department(s) and division(s).

There is the expectation that courses should have at least two full-time members of academic staff involved in their running.

Explain how the administrative support for the new or amended course will be arranged. Where a change of structure or mode of delivery of an existing course is proposed explain the impact of the changes on administrative requirements. This is of particular importance where a new body is required to administer the course, but should also take account of the existing responsibilities where the course is to be offered by an existing body.

A thorough description of the course oversight, organisation and administration is of particular importance in relation to any sort of joint course or course drawing on resources outside of the home department or faculty.

For proposals for part-time research programmes a member of academic staff should be nominated as having an overall responsibility for the academic well-being of research students studying on a part-time basis.

Identify the arrangements for student representatives and representative structures associated with the course, and articulate their integration into course management and oversight.

For part-time and distance learning courses describe the arrangements for matriculation or matriculation in absence.<sup>1</sup>

### **15. Consultation undertaken**

Describe and provide evidence of the consultation process undertaken with:

- students (see section 7.13 of the *Policy and guidance*)
- with other departments and faculties which may have an interest in the proposal (the Department for Continuing Education should be consulted for all part time course proposals)
- with services: all relevant libraries (see below), Student Registry (see below) language centre (when relevant)
- with individual colleges
- with external advisors (see section 7.16 of the *Policy and Guidance*)

The librarians of all relevant libraries must have been consulted and must provide a written statement concerning the provision of books and other learning resources and the resource implications (recurrent and/or non recurrent, staff and/or non staff), which should be attached to the proposal.

For any new course, or major change proposal which has an impact on assessment, or on the structure of the student records, the Student Registry (which incorporates, amongst others, the Academic Records Office and the Exams and Assessments team) should be consulted at the proposal stage. A written statement from the Director of Student Registry confirming that sufficient discussions have taken about implications of the course structure and assessment arrangements should be attached to the proposal.

### **16. Documentation to be attached**

- Course Handbook (in draft)
- Examination Regulations (in draft)
- Examination conventions (in draft)
- Documentation relating to consultation undertaken
- Tuition fee form (Annex G)

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<sup>1</sup> In Trinity Term 2016 Education Committee agreed that matriculation in absence should be possible for courses where students' attendance in Oxford did not fit with existing matriculation ceremonies (paper reference EdC(TT16)072). If permission for matriculation in absence is sought, this should be made clear in the course proposal document.

## Annex B

Oxford Learning Institute  
University of Oxford

### Designing Assessments to Minimise Plagiarism

- A. Plagiarism is more likely to occur when students:
1. Do not understand the elements of good referencing and attribution and expected practice
  2. Have not had the opportunity to actively engage with the expectations of and definitions of academic integrity and sound academic practice
  3. Manage their time poorly, leave assignments to the last minute or experience extreme assessment pressures, such as too many assignments all due at the same time.
  4. Do not appreciate or perceive the intrinsic value of the assignments as a vehicle for learning and achievement of their goals.
- B. Assessment strategies that minimise plagiarism reduce opportunities for students to:
1. Copy other students' work, either from a) current cohorts or b) past cohorts
  2. Engage in unacceptable levels of collaboration
  3. Submit original work written by someone else
  4. Patch together or use large chunks of the work of others without appropriate referencing

Although plagiarism detection software can often detect the fourth kind of plagiarism (B4) and one assessor reading the work of all students in a cohort can detect copying or unacceptable collaboration amongst students in the same cohort (B1a, B2), it is more difficult to guard against students submitting original work done by someone else, whether it is a past student or a commercial enterprise that sells custom papers written to particular specifications.

- C. Suggested Strategies for summative assessment (with annotations about which causes and types of plagiarism they help to minimise)

*Traditional closed-book, timed examinations* are a common way of ensuring that students are doing the work themselves. However, even under these conditions one needs to:

- *vary assessment questions* from year to year to prevent preparation and memorisation of answers in advance. (B1, B3)
- *word assessment questions to require novel applications of knowledge, critical appraisal and creativity* rather than general questions that demand students simply list, explain, describe or re-state what they know. (B4)

*In submitted work*, avoid setting assignments that ask students to provide a lot of factual information, easily available on the internet or from other sources, which are more likely to lead students to adopt a copy-and-paste or patchwork approach when putting together their submission.



*Build in opportunities to educate students about good research and academic practices in your discipline, in addition to clearly stating expectations regarding plagiarism and its consequences. (See Oxford Learning Institute for further suggestions <http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/support/teaching/resources/plagiarism/>) (A1, A2, B4)*

*Coordinate schedules of assessment for a cohort to reduce pressure on students. (A3)*

*Talk with students about their research or projects. A viva is a traditional way of ensuring that the student has done the work and understands it. Presentations can be used instead of or in addition to a written piece of work. Students can also be called upon in class discussions to offer insights based on their projects.*

*Monitor the process. Supervision of research projects or dissertations also allow an academic to observe the process of the work and the student's unfolding understanding, helps them understand the value of their work, as well as head off problems that can lead students into pressures that lead to temptations to plagiarise. (A1-A4, B1-B4)*

*Make assignments cumulative and set interim deadlines for pieces of this larger work, such as creating a project plan or proposal, annotated bibliography, logbooks, outline, or first draft before the final product is due. Like the previous suggestion, these steps allow you to emphasise and review the process, as well as the product of learning. Interim steps allow students to manage their time, increase their sense of ownership, allow opportunities for feedback from academics and minimise the risk of them using someone else's work. It must be clear to students what part of the work is classwork and what part will be summatively assessed (duly reflected in regulations) and also where in the process, and from whom, they will receive feedback. (A3, A4, B1, B3)*

*Design assignments and questions that are student-specific. Such assignments might draw on work-experience, cultural experiences or research projects (e.g. dissertations) that are unique to the student. By asking students to make links between key concepts or theories and their own experience or projects, teachers demand originality and help communicate the personal relevance of the learning process. (A4, A1, A3). However, drawing on one's own previous (academic or professional) *written* work will also require careful referencing.*

#### **Sources:**

Carroll, J. and J. Appleton (May 2001) *Plagiarism: A Good Practice Guide*. (JISC document) From [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded\\_documents/brookes.pdf](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/brookes.pdf)

Hamilton, M & J. Richardson (2007) An academic integrity approach to learning and assessment design. *Journal of Learning Design*, 2 (1), 37-51.

Irons, A.D. (2004) Using portfolios in assessment to reduce plagiarism. Plagiarism: Prevention Practice and Policies 2004 Conference.

Lancaster, T. & F. Culwin (2007) Preserving academic integrity—fighting against nonoriginality agencies. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 38 (1), 153–157 doi:10.1111/j.1467-8535.2006.00491.x

Leeds University Guide: From <http://www.ldu.leeds.ac.uk/plagiarism/design.php>

Sterngold, A. (2004) Confronting plagiarism: how conventional teaching invites cyber-cheating. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 36: 3, 16-21.

WCET (2009). Best practice strategies to promote academic integrity in online education. Version 2.0 June 2009.

## **Annex C**

### **Guidance for divisional bodies in providing scrutiny of a new course/major change**

This is an illustrative list of the type of questions that divisional bodies are likely to be concerned with in ensuring that a new course or major amendment is academically and operationally sound.

#### **Strategic fit**

- Is the proposed course coherent with the current offering and strategic direction of the department/faculty and division?

#### **The proposed course**

- Are the aims of the course clear and appropriate?
- Are these aims translated into clear, appropriate and achievable learning outcomes throughout the parts of the course?
- Is it clear how the aims and learning outcomes will be achieved through the design and content of the curriculum?
- Is the course structure coherent and of appropriate breadth and scope?
- Have relevant Subject Benchmark Statements<sup>1</sup> and the Qualifications Descriptors in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications<sup>2</sup> informed the development of the programme and its intended learning outcomes?
- Are the stated learning outcomes of the programme appropriate for the level of award with regard to the relevant Qualifications Descriptor?
- Are the teaching, learning and assessment strategies clear and appropriate for the content of the course?

#### **The course documentation**

- Is the draft Course handbook well written and complete (insofar as it can be at this stage)?
- Are the Examination Regulations and conventions coherent and complete?

#### **Proposed course delivery**

- Is the student workload appropriate and correctly balanced, including the scheduling of assessment?
- Will appropriate use of learning technologies be made in delivering the programme?
- How will student feedback be collected and used? Are the provisions for feedback to students adequate and appropriate?

#### **Resources**

- Are staffing levels and specialisms consistent with the course content and workloads?
- Are there sufficient examining resources available?

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<sup>1</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements)

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Framework-Higher-Education-Qualifications-08.pdf](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Framework-Higher-Education-Qualifications-08.pdf)

- Are there sufficient administrative resources available?
- Is there sufficient space (including laboratory or other specialist facilities) to accommodate the course?
- Has there been effective liaison between the proposers and the various support services and colleges?

### **Assessment**

- Are proposed assessment regimes fit for purpose?
- Will the methods of assessment be effective in measuring student attainment of the intended learning outcomes and in promoting effective student learning?
- How will assessment criteria be communicated to students?

### **Student and external consultation**

- What attention has been paid to external advice?
- What attention has been paid to input from students?

**Annex D**

**Conference Graduate Committee cover sheet**

<b>Outline information</b>				
Department or Faculty				
Course title				
Proposed start date				
Duration of course (in months)			<b>FT / PT</b>	
Please provide a brief outline of the course. It would be helpful if you would indicate if the course is envisaged to be a precursor of further graduate study or a professional qualification.				
If the course is PT, please indicate: (a) Mode of delivery (variant of an existing FT course; course delivered primarily by distance learning (with an element of University attendance) or course delivered primarily with blocks of residential, face-to-face teaching).  (b) Please summarise the likely timing (term/week) of any residential blocks in Oxford,  (c) Term(s) in which students can start the course				
<b>Student numbers</b>				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Anticipated student intake (from initial intake through to steady state)				
Are these additional student numbers, or substituting for those on another programme (if so, which)?			<b>Additional /substitute</b>	
If additional, are they already included in the Divisional Five Year Plan?			<b>Yes / No</b>	
What proportion of students will be home / EU?				
<b>Application information</b>				
Entry requirements				
Application deadline				
Anticipated university fee				

<p>What scholarships or sources of financial support are available to students taking this course?</p>	
<p>Which colleges have already agreed to accept students on this course?</p>	
<p><b>Course delivery</b></p>	
<p>Describe the implications for college facilities and teaching resources. Please indicate if these are required or desirable.</p>	
<p>Which Department/Faculty members might teach on the course?</p>	
<p>Which broad subject areas would be appropriate for those taking on the role of college advisors?</p>	
<p>Please include any other information concerning the proposed degree which might be of relevance to colleges here.</p>	

## **Annex E**

### **Nomination for an external reviewer for a new course or major change**

#### **Background**

Following initial approval by the division a proposal for a new course or major change to an existing course is sent for external review. This forms a key part of scrutiny as it allows divisions to access the subject and professional/industry expertise necessary to assure themselves that the proposal meets the expectations for course content and standards in the subject area (see section 7.27 of the *Policy and Guidance on new courses and major changes to courses (including closure)* for more information).

#### **Nomination process**

Please nominate two reviewers who meet the criteria for nomination (below). They will be approached in order, with the second only being approached if the first is unable to participate. Proposals relating to a course with specific industrial or professional relevance, where completion of a course can lead on to entry to a specific profession or preparation for a career in industry, should also make two nominations for an industry/professional specialist reviewer.

#### **Criteria for nomination**

The person specification<sup>1</sup> for an external reviewer is adapted from that for an external examiner, as they fulfil similar functions:

- knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality
- competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme of study
- relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being proposed, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate
- competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures
- sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers
- familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed
- fluency in English, and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s)
- meeting applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies
- awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula
- competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.

It is also important to avoid any conflicts of interest and so departments and faculties should be mindful to ensure that nominees are not in the following categories or circumstances:

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted for sense from <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgexaminers/annexj/>

- a member of a governing body or committee of the University or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners\*
- anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the proposed programme of study\*
- anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the proposed programme of study
- anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the proposed programme of study
- anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the proposed programme(s) or modules in question
- former staff or students of the University unless a period of five years has elapsed
- anyone involved in a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another institution or a current or recent external examiner.

\*Noting that some flexibility may have to be employed in selection of external reviewers for small or specialist subject areas.

### External reviewers - subject specialist

#### Nomination 1

Name	
Position	
Institution	
Contact details (email, telephone and postal address)	
Link to online CV/Institution personal page (or attach CV if not available)	

#### Nomination 2

Name	
Position	
Institution	
Contact details (email, telephone and postal address)	
Link to online CV/Institution personal page (or attach CV if not available)	

### External reviewer – industry/professional specialist (if applicable)

#### Nomination 1



Name	
Position	
Institution	
Contact details (email, telephone and postal address)	
Link to online CV/Institution personal page (or attach CV if not available)	

**Nomination 2**

Name	
Position	
Institution	
Contact details (email, telephone and postal address)	
Link to online CV/Institution personal page (or attach CV if not available)	

## Annex F

### Note of guidance for external reviewers

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Dear External reviewer,

Firstly, thank you for agreeing to act as an External reviewer for the University as part of its process for approving new courses or major changes to courses. A robust approval process for new courses or major changes to courses is a central part of the University's mechanisms for ensuring that its students and the wider public can have confidence in the academic standards of its awards and the quality of the learning opportunities we provide.

This letter outlines the new course and major change approval process and how your review fits into that process, and how your comments will be considered.

#### Aim of the process

The process aims to ensure that the following have been considered:

- the academic case for expansion or change in the subject and category concerned including fit with the department/faculty, division and university strategy and priorities;
- the potential of the course to attract high quality students in sufficient numbers to ensure the viability of the programme;
- the availability of supervisors and appropriate departmental and central facilities and support (IT, library and subject specific resources);
- the ability of the faculty/department to provide appropriate organisational support;
- the capacity of the collegiate University to meet the students' wider support needs;
- the financial implications for the department or faculty and the wider university community;
- the level of risk involved in each course proposal, including the means proposed for its delivery, and the required level of resource necessary to ensure that the required outcomes of the new course can be achieved;
- the views of students;
- the views of an external subject specialist and, where relevant, an industry professional; and
- the views of other departments which might be involved in or affected by the introduction of the course.

And that the proposed course is:

- academically sound, with clear aims and learning outcomes and a teaching and assessment methodology which supports those aims.
- aligned with:
  - the *University awards framework* (and consequently the qualification and level descriptors set out in the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ));
  - the relevant subject benchmark statement; and
  - any specific requirements set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies;
- designed inclusively to take into account the needs of a diverse student body.

## **Structure of the process**

Proposals originate and are developed within a department or faculty. Formal scrutiny is then undertaken through the appropriate bodies of the division<sup>1</sup>. Once a proposal has received initial academic scrutiny by the division it is sent out for external review.

The reason we involve an external reviewer is that they provide a subject specialist perspective outside of the department or faculty putting forward the proposal. They can comment on matters of quality and standards that are specific to that discipline area and make comparisons against national standards and similar courses elsewhere.

The comments from the external reviewer are considered by the division as part of its decision whether or not to recommend the course for approval to the University through its Education Committee.

## **Completing your report**

You should receive the:

- full course proposal
- draft course handbook

The annex to this letter includes a series of questions which it would be useful for you to address in your review. However if you have any comments which fall outside these questions please feel free to include them.

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<sup>1</sup> The University is structured into departments and faculties which are entities at the same level, these are grouped together in four divisions (and the Department for Continuing Education).

## Annex

### External review questions

Please comment on the potential of the course to attract high quality students in sufficient numbers to ensure the viability of the programme.

Please comment on the aims and intended learning outcomes of the proposed programme in respect of:

- subject content;
- subject specific skills; and
- general, transferrable skills.

Please comment as to whether the aims and intended learning outcomes of the programme meet the subject benchmark statements, the relevant level descriptor of the Framework of Higher Education Qualifications<sup>2</sup> and standards set by professional bodies (where relevant).

Please comment on the suitability of the proposed methods of teaching and assessment including the suitability of the type and spread of assessment, in relation to the intended aims and learning outcomes of the programme, and, to the best of your knowledge, in comparison with similar courses elsewhere.

Please comment as to whether the design of the syllabus will enable the aims and intended learning outcomes to be met in respect of:

- subject content
- subject specific skills
- general, transferable skills
- progression of skills and knowledge through the programme.

If not, please indicate ways in which this might be addressed.

Do you consider that the programme takes appropriate account of recent developments in the subject? If not, please indicate ways in which this might be addressed.

Do you consider that the course is appropriate to prepare graduates for employment in the

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/qualifications>

relevant sectors (for industrial, scientific and professional courses)? If not, please indicate ways in which this might be addressed.

Do you have any other comments on any aspect of the documentation?

ANNEX ;

## PLANNING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE

## JUSTIFICATION FOR PROPOSED UNIVERSITY FEE FOR 2020/21

NOTES OF GUIDANCE AS AT **NOVEMBER 2018****This form should be used in respect of:**

- A new programme of study
- An existing programme for which it is proposed to change the fee band, or to increase the fee by more than 10% as compared with the fee level for the previous year or by one or more fee bands

The fee level should be aligned to an existing fee band, as given under Part A below.

**Approval process and timetable**

The fee is subject to approval by PRAC, in consultation with the Education Committee, on the recommendation of the Joint Fees and Student Support Advisory Group (JFSSAG) in the light of the information in this form, which must be submitted as follows:

- for new programmes, to Education Policy Support and PRAS as part of the academic case for the introduction of the programme, under the provisions of 'introduction of new courses' at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/epsc/guidance/index.shtml>
- for a change in the level of an existing programme by more than 10% or by one or more fee bands, to the relevant division in time to reach PRAS by week 7 of Hilary Term of the year before that to which the changes apply (i.e. by early March 2019 in respect of fees for 2020/21).

**PLEASE COMPLETE****PART A**

<b>Type of programme</b> please specify (e.g. MSc, DPhil)	
<b>Name of programme of study</b>	
<b>Mode of study</b>	FT/PT
<b>Department/Division</b>	
<b>New programme?</b> [please delete]	YES/NO
<b>SITS code</b> [existing programmes only]	
<b>Number of students</b> [for new programme, give expected annual intake; for existing programme, give numbers in each of the last three years]	
<b>Year to which proposed fee applies</b> [i.e. in which academic year is it to be first charged?]	
<b>Form completed by</b> [name]	
<b>Date of completion</b>	

**Notes**

Please place crosses in the appropriate table to indicate the proposed fee levels, for both Home and Overseas students, for the course. Fee levels stated in the tables are for 2020/21, uplifted by 4% over fees for 2019/20 and rounded to the nearest £5.

\* U00700 is the govt. capped Home fee rate (£9,250 in 2019/20); this rate is pending confirmation of the cap level for 2020/21

For Undergraduate Courses 2020/21			
Fee Band	Fee Rate FT (PT)	Home	Overseas
U00100	5,150 (2,575)		
U00200	5,650 (2,825)		
U00300	7,920 (3,960)		
U00400	8,935 (4,470)		
U00500	9,000 (4,680)		
U00600	9,675 (4,840)		
U00700*	9,250 (4,625)		
U00800	17,555 (8,780)		
U00900	25,740 (12,870)		
U01000	26,875 (13,440)		
U01050	27,285 (13,645)		
U01100	28,330 (14,165)		
U01200	28,690 (14,345)		
U01250	30,030 (15,015)		
U01300	34,025 (17,015)		
U01350	36,065 (18,035)		
U01400	38,945 (19,475)		

For Modular & Whole Course Fees 2020/21			
Fee Band	Fee Rate FT (PT)	Home	Overseas
MP_P00100	N/A (36,010)		
MOD_00100	N/A (1,250)		
MOD_00200	N/A (1,600)		
MOD_00300	N/A (1,910)		
MOD_00400	N/A (1,930)		
MOD_00500	N/A (2,000)		
MOD_00600	N/A (2,130)		
MOD_00650	N/A (2,260)		
MOD_00700	N/A (2,305)		
MOD_00800	N/A (3,635)		
MOD_00850	N/A (3,850)		
MOD_00900	N/A (4,605)		
MOD_01000	N/A (6,585)		
MOD_01100	N/A (7,270)		
MOD_01200	N/A (7,550)		
MOD_01250	N/A (7,690)		
MOD_01300	N/A (8,780)		
MOD_01400	N/A (9,215)		
MOD_01500	N/A (14,540)		
MOD_01550	N/A (15,375)		

**For Postgraduate Courses 2020/21**

Fee Band	Fee Rate FT (PT)	Home	Overseas
P00100	4,830 (2,415)		
P00200	6,780 (3,390)		
P00300	7,085 (3,545)		
P00400	7,520 (3,760)		
P00500	8,040 (4,020)		
P00600	8,245 (4,125)		
P00700	8,525 (4,265)		
P00800	8,630 (4,315)		
P00900	8,880 (4,440)		
P01000	9,445 (4,725)		
P01100	10,145 (5,075)		
P01200	10,695 (5,350)		
P01300	10,880 (5,440)		
P01350	11,395 (5,700)		
P01400	11,605 (5,805)		
P01500	12,335 (6,170)		
P01600	13,075 (6,540)		
P01700	13,700 (6,850)		
P01800	14,060 (7,030)		
P01900	14,350 (7,175)		
P02000	14,765 (7,385)		
P02100	15,090 (7,545)		
P02200	16,210 (8,105)		
P02300	16,485 (8,245)		
P02400	17,070 (8,535)		
P02500	17,555 (8,780)		
P02600	18,454 (9,230)		
P02700	18,680 (9,340)		
P02750	19,655 (9,830)		
P02800	20,150 (10,075)		
P02900	20,920 (10,460)		
P03000	21,545 (10,775)		
P03100	22,050 (11,025)		
P03200	23,505 (11,755)		
P03300	24,910 (12,455)		
P03350	26,405 (13,205)		
P03400	26,520 (13,260)		
P03500	28,040 (14,020)		
P03600	33,625 (16,815)		
P03700	35,510 (17,755)		
P03800	38,945 (19,475)		
P03900	40,585 (20,295)		
P04000	43,255 (21,630)		
P04100	44,605 (22,305)		
P04150	53,040 (26,520)		
P04200	59,490 (29,745)		
P04300	N/A (45,240)		

## PART B

<p><b>1. Additional course costs</b> Do any additional course-related costs fall on students (over and above course fees)?</p>
YES/NO
<p>If yes, please provide a concise statement covering the following, for publication on the university website for the information of applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether the purpose identified is compulsory or optional;</li> <li>• The cost, or range of costs, estimated to fall on students for course-related purposes (over and above University fees and any college fees);</li> <li>• The support available to all students on the course (where relevant); and</li> <li>• Discretionary funds available from the department, trust funds, colleges or other sources, with an indication of the grounds on which such support may be available (e.g. means-tested).</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Modular courses</b> For any modular course, please give details of (a) annual programme fee, (b) per module fee, (c) expected total fee for the course, for HEU and OS students.</p>
<p><b>3. Progression arrangements</b> For any PGT course where a student may first complete a PGCert or PGDip, please make clear the fees that will apply for each stage of the programme, and, where applicable, the fees that will apply if the student enters the MSc direct.</p>
<p><b>4. Benchmarking</b> With which other institutions and courses has the programme been compared? Please give full details of all relevant comparators and the fees they charge (home/EU and overseas), and comment on the reasons why the fee for this programme has been set at the same, higher, or lower level.</p>
<p><b>5. Departmental business case</b> <i>New programmes only:</i> please attach projections of income and expenditure on the course <b>using the course costing template</b><sup>1</sup>, and explain the basis on which the fee has been set in this context (e.g. is it to cover all or a proportion of the costs, or to make a surplus for future investment or to support other departmental activities?). Estimated expenditure should be on a full economic cost basis, and the plan should make clear the number of students required for the programme to break even. <i>Existing programmes:</i> explain the basis on which the fee has been set in the context of the department's finances (e.g. is it to cover all or a proportion of the costs, or to make a surplus?)</p>

<sup>1</sup> Available from divisional offices or from the Planning and Council Secretariat Section ([jenny.nix@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:jenny.nix@admin.ox.ac.uk), or [kris.tiffen@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:kris.tiffen@admin.ox.ac.uk))



<b>6. Bursaries</b>
(a) In respect of <b>home/EU graduate</b> fees: has provision been made for bursaries for research council students? <sup>2</sup> If no, please explain reasons
YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE
(b) In respect of <b>all</b> fee proposals covered by this form: Has provision been made for bursaries for any other categories of students? How does this compare to bursary provision in earlier years?
YES/NO
(c) Please give details of the number and level of bursaries proposed for home/EU and/or overseas students, the criteria for allocation, and how far the costs will be met out of fee income.
<b>7. Admissions</b>
<i>In respect of existing courses:</i> please give information on admissions in recent years, including the ratio of applicants to offers and places taken up, information on how this compares to the quota of students and information regarding the quality of candidates.
<i>For both new and existing courses:</i> please comment on the likely impact of the proposed fee level, in the light of relevant evidence, e.g. the effect of increases in fee levels for comparable courses at Oxford or elsewhere, and of any bursary provision.
<b>8. Cognate Courses</b>
Please give information on consultations undertaken with departments that run courses similar to the present course. In particular, if the proposed fee levels are different from those for the cognate course, please comment on why this is the case.
<b>9. Student Engagement</b>
JFSSAG will not consider any proposals for fee level changes, for either continuing or new students, that are not accompanied by a note on how students were engaged in the fee-setting process. Please provide (a) a statement on the ways in which students have been involved in the process, (b) details of the comments made by those students and (c) a departmental response to those comments. Please consult the Education Committee guidance on student consultation, at: <a href="http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pandgstudentengageandrep/">http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pandgstudentengageandrep/</a>

<sup>2</sup> RCUK sets an indicative fee (£4,260 in 2018/19): where research councils pay for individual or 'quota' studentships, any difference between this maximum and the fee charged by the institution may not be charged to the student, and fee remissions are not possible in such circumstances; any difference must therefore be met by means of a bursary. However, where funds are received in the form of a Doctoral Training Grant, it is open to the University to charge a fee higher than the RCUK indicative fee, subject to compliance with the terms and conditions set by the relevant research council.

## Annex H: Guidance on delegated responsibility for the approval of changes to the *Examination Regulations*

### Background

1. Under Council Regulation 15 of 2002 Section 2.4(1) Education Committee has the power 'to make, amend, and repeal regulations concerning the courses and examinations for undergraduates and graduate and other students (including Recognised and Visiting Students)' and to approve those proposed by the academic divisions (and OUDCE) in relation to examinations and courses for all types of students.
2. The committee has set out in *Annex I Vested Interests* of the *Policy and Guidance on new courses and major changes (P&G new courses)* specific guidance about when changes can be made in relation to existing courses. The course change types referred to in this document are explained in *Annex I*.
3. Further information, including examples, is provided in *Annex N Guidance on types of course change* which contains more detailed information on expectations regarding consultation with students and notification of applicants of changes. All documents are available from the Education Committee website.<sup>1</sup>
4. Current practice in relation to changes to the *Examination Regulations* is set out in the Education Committee's Standing Orders (EdC(HT17)006) as follows:
  - Regulations for a new course, together with the course proposal itself, may be approved by the PVC (Education). Further minor amendments to regulations for a new course previously approved by the committee may be approved by the PVC (Education) or officers of Education Policy Support.<sup>2</sup>
  - Major changes to the special regulations for existing courses may be approved by the PVC (Education) or officers of Education Policy Support.
  - Minor changes to the special regulations for existing courses may be approved by divisional boards or individuals with delegated authority of the board.<sup>3</sup>
  - Changes to the general regulations may be approved by the PVC (Education), subject to prior discussion as appropriate with the relevant Panel of Education Committee and the Proctors.
5. This annex is intended to provide more detailed operational guidance on how changes to *Examination Regulations* relating to all types of course change should be managed.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses)

<sup>2</sup> In practice, draft *Examination Regulations* for a new course are provided by a division alongside the course proposal when it is submitted for consideration by or on behalf of Education Committee. The actual draft regulations are not presented to the committee or the PVC (Education), but scrutinised by EPS officers on behalf of Education Committee once the course proposal has been approved.

<sup>3</sup> This means departments and faculties must seek divisional approval for all changes to the *Examination Regulations*.

## Role of departments

6. Departments' role in the management of course changes and related changes to the *Examination Regulations* is as follows:
  - Identification of the need for a change to a course.
  - Consulting effectively with existing students and staff as appropriate.<sup>4</sup>
  - Preparing proposals for the change and drafting revised *Examination Regulations* for divisional consideration.<sup>5</sup>
  - Communicating with applicants once a change has been approved.<sup>6</sup>
7. Departments need to be aware that all changes require a justification. Where the change relates to the academic delivery, content or assessment of the course then an academic rationale must be provided.

## Role of divisions

8. Divisions' role in the management of course changes and related changes to the *Examination Regulations* is as follows:
  - Receiving requests for changes from departments.
  - Considering whether the rationale provided justifies the change.
  - Assessment of whether the vested interests of students and applicants have been adequately considered in accordance with *Annex I on Vested Interests*.
  - Assessment of whether the consultation with students has been adequate and that student views have been taken into account.<sup>7</sup>
  - Thorough proofreading of the proposed revised regulations.
  - Checking for consequential changes in related courses and regulations e.g. joint courses, general regulations etc.
  - Keeping track of course and regulation changes.
  - Approving very minor and minor course changes (Type 1 and Type 2).
  - Submitting changes for publication by the *Gazette*.

## Role of Education Policy Support

9. Education Policy Support's role in the management of course changes and related changes to the *Examination Regulations* is to:
  - Provide advice to divisions if needed at any point in the course and regulation change process.
  - Consider cases where there is doubt as to what category of change is proposed between those that can be approved by divisions, and those that require Education Committee approval.

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<sup>4</sup> See *Annex N Guidance on types of course change*.

<sup>5</sup> Guidance on drafting changes to regulations is available on the *Examination Regulations* website: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/information/publishingchangestoregulations/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/information/publishingchangestoregulations/)

<sup>6</sup> See *Annex N Guidance on types of course change*.

<sup>7</sup> See *Annex N Guidance on types of course change*.

- Checking the regulations for major course changes (Type 2 expedited and Type 3) and new courses before publication.
- On occasion, approving some regulation changes on behalf of Education Committee.

### **Role of Education Committee**

10. Education Committee's role in the management of course changes and related changes to the *Examination Regulations* is to:
  - Approve major changes to courses (Type 2 expedited and Type 3) and new courses.

### **Publishing changes to regulations in the Gazette**

11. Any textual (rather than presentational) changes to regulations must be published in the *Gazette* in order to come into effect. Changes should only be submitted for publication after they have been approved by the appropriate body and, in the case of major course changes (Type 2 expedited and Type 3) and new courses, checked by Education Policy Support.
12. Publication of major course changes and new course regulations should take place as soon as possible after approval has been received. **Regulations should ideally be published before advertising takes place for a new course or a course subject to major changes, and must be published no later than one term prior to students commencing the course.**
13. For major changes to undergraduate courses involving changes to the FHS, FHS regulations must be published prior to students starting the FPE.

## Annex I: Vested interests

1. When considering a change to a course it is important to consider the impact that it might have on students and their 'vested interests'. The change could relate to the course description as contained within the *Examination Regulations*, Examination conventions, course handbook or syllabus. Whether that change is allowable will depend on the nature of the change and the timing of its implementation. Education Committee's primary concerns are to avoid impeding desirable developments in the syllabus unnecessarily, and at the same time to ensure that candidates are treated fairly and not disadvantaged by any change.
2. For all types of changes (excluding minor textual corrections) it is expected that students would be consulted in advance through the normal mechanisms such as Joint Consultative Committees (JCCs). This consultation is particularly important for Type 2 changes. Only in the case of expedited changes is consultation of individual students required.
3. For a more detailed breakdown of the types of changes, levels of approval, and consultation with students/notification of applicants required please see *Annex N Guidance on types of course change*.<sup>1</sup>
4. All changes to *Examination Regulations* should follow the guidance note and template provided on the *Examination Regulations* website.<sup>2</sup> Further information is provided in *Annex H Guidance on delegated responsibility for the approval of changes to Examination Regulations*.

### Type 1: Changes with no impact or only benefit to students

5. A change which has no material impact or is only of benefit to students may be made at any time (within reason) and with immediate effect. These changes should be approved through the normal mechanisms in divisions.
6. This type of change might include:
  - presentational changes e.g. re-formatting or re-ordering of information;
  - revision in the title (but not substance) of a paper, e.g., 'The anthropology of medicine' to 'Medical Anthropology';
  - extension of a submission deadline (unless it causes deadlines to become clustered). However, any significant change to deadlines should be considered a Type 2 change;
  - addition of reading time in an exam;
  - minor corrections, e.g., duplication, spelling, errors in editing previous changes etc.;
  - a merely formal or cosmetic change, e.g., an overdue correction of the prescribed edition of a text which is in fact no longer in use (where there is any doubt this should be treated as Type 2 'expedited change');

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<sup>1</sup> [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses/)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/information/publishingchangestoregulations/>

- confirmation of available options where students are clearly advised in advance that not all options will be offered in all years, for instance, because of small numbers.

## **Type 2: Changes with a material or negative impact for students**

7. Any change which could have a material or negative impact on students if introduced with immediate effect can only normally be introduced prior to the students starting the first term of their course of study for the examination concerned.<sup>3</sup> These changes should be approved through the normal mechanisms in divisions (and except for expedited changes do not require approval from Education Committee).
8. This means that:
  - for a course's FPE or for a Masters by coursework, changes can only be introduced for new entrants;
  - for courses with a single-part FHS, changes can be made to the FHS whilst students are undertaking their FPE; and
  - for courses with a multi-part FHS changes can be made to a later part whilst students are taking an earlier Part, for example, changes can be made to Part B for students currently studying Part A (unless the change relates to a pre-requisite requirement i.e. a proposed change in Part B cannot be made if it relates to choices students will have already made at Part A unless no material or negative impact can be shown).
9. This type of change might include:
  - addition or removal of an option paper;
  - addition or deletion of an element of the syllabus;
  - changes to assessment including:
    - increase, decrease or rebalancing of assessment workload;
    - change in assessment schedule e.g. submission deadlines;
    - change in assessment methodology e.g. from submitted essay to timed written exam (but for introduction of a novel form of assessment consult paragraph 2.4 in the main *Policy and Guidance*);
  - creation of an optional exit award, for example, students may *choose* to leave after the 3<sup>rd</sup> year with a BA but no new progression hurdle is required for continuation to 4<sup>th</sup> year.
10. Multiple Type 2 changes may constitute a fundamental change (Type 3, see below). When assessing the balance between Type 2 and Type 3 changes it might be valuable to reflect on how the change might be perceived by applicants.

### **Expediting a change**

11. There may be situations where a change may need to be expedited and be applied to students who have already started their first term of their course of study for the examination concerned. This may be the case, for example, where new teaching

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<sup>3</sup> Other than for students whose normal course of study for the examination has been extended on account of illness or other cause.

resources make it desirable for a change to be introduced or where sudden and unexpected changes in staffing make a change necessary.

12. In these circumstances the divisional board is required to make a special case to Education Committee, to show that it has consulted the affected students individually, and to include a summary of responses received.

### **Type 3: Fundamental changes**

13. Any change which has a fundamental impact on the nature or structure of the programme cannot be made for students who have already begun their course. In many cases the change should only be made for the next applicant cycle to allow for marketing and publicity material to be updated. Should there be a need for a fundamental change to be applied to applicants already in the application cycle, all applicants would need to be individually informed of the change. Such changes cannot be made less than three months before the start of the course.
14. These changes would be considered internally through the major change process of the *Policy and Guidance on new courses and major changes*.
15. This type of change might include:
  - addition or removal of a core paper;
  - change of a paper from core to option and vice versa;
  - change of course title;
  - significant restructuring or change in the course content;
  - introduction or raising of a progression hurdle, e.g., only students achieving a 2.1 are allowed to progress from the 3<sup>rd</sup> year to 4<sup>th</sup> year.

## Annex J

### Proposal for limited entry part-time DPhil in the Department/Faculty of xxx

This form is only intended for use where permission is sought to establish a part-time variant of a full-time DPhil programme to meet the particular needs of a specific student or applicant. Proposals to establish a part-time variant open to multiple students require full approval as a new course proposal and should use Annex M of the *P&G new courses*.

#### Approval process

Once completed this proposal should be submitted for endorsement to the Director of Graduate Studies and Head of Department/Chair of Faculty Board before being presented to the divisional office for endorsement and submission to Education Policy Support. Proposals will be considered on behalf of Education Committee by the PVC Education.

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#### 1. Academic justification

What is the academic case for allowing this student or students to study on a part-time basis at Oxford? Include information on why it is more appropriate for them to study at Oxford rather than at another institution which already offers part-time doctorates: e.g. availability of particular supervisor/library resources etc.

#### 2. Supervision

Please state the:

- name of proposed supervisor
- name of proposed academic adviser or co-supervisor
- experience of the supervisor in supporting students studying on a part-time basis
- proposed arrangements in the event that the supervisor were to leave Oxford, or were to be absent on leave or sick for a prolonged period (bearing in mind that the student may be registered for 6 or more years). Are there other individuals in the department (preferably at least two) willing and able to take over supervision?

If further part-time students may be admitted in future, please comment on availability of individuals willing and able to act as supervisors in such cases (bearing in mind the potential extra demands, especially in terms of availability, likely to be involved).

#### 3. Student – supervisor contact

What would be the minimum number of face-to-face meetings between student and supervisor per term? Reference should be made to the relevant divisional Code of Practice for supervision.

How frequently and by what other means will contact be maintained? Will the supervisor be available if necessary at weekends/holidays?

#### 4. Monitoring

Proposed arrangements for monitoring student(s)' progress



## **5. Attendance**

How often will the student(s) be working in the University? (Current part-time DPhil programmes operate at a minimum of 30 days university-based work per annum.)

## **6. Induction**

Please set out the proposed arrangements for induction, guidance and mentoring.

## **7. Academic context**

Please comment on:

- laboratory and/or fieldwork requirements for the project: what is required and how it will be made available
- access to seminars
- opportunities to attend conferences
- opportunities for other formal and informal interaction with academic staff and students.

## **8. Facilities**

Please set out how satisfactory provision will be made for the following:

- access to library resources, including comments on implications of library opening hours and ordering/borrowing facilities for the student(s)
- access to IT resources
- availability of book or conference grants
- availability of relevant facilities in the student(s)' place of work (if needed)
- any other facilities necessary for the research project.

## **9. Research training**

Please state how the student's need for research training will be assessed (in the light of their previous experience), and how satisfactory provision will be made for research training.

## **10. College place and provision**

If this proposal relates to an applicant, you are asked (a) to identify a college willing to admit the student on a part-time basis. If this proposal relates to a current student switching mode of study, you should confirm that the college is supportive of the proposal.

## Annex K

### Implementing a new course or major change

This list contains a checklist of things that need to be done once a new course, or major change, has been agreed by or on behalf of Education Committee. The tasks will vary according to the type of course and the type of change so this is provided as an initial prompt only.

- Communicate approval to those involved, including libraries
- Start programme set-up process (fill in form – this process gets the course set up on the student system, including the generation of a course code)<sup>1</sup>
- Finalise:
  - *Examination Regulations* (and get these published in the Gazette)
  - Course handbook
  - Any outstanding details of teaching/paper contents etc, including staffing, IT support, timetable
  - Specimen exam papers
  - Transcript text
- Ensure that next:
  - Annual SNP return includes numbers for the new course
  - Annual Fee-setting return includes the new course
- Liaise with UAO or GAO as appropriate re marketing materials (web and print) including prospectus entry. UAO will need to get UCAS code if new UG programme.
- Liaise with Examination & Assessments team about examinations timetable.
- If new award type/degree title, the following things need to be sorted out:
  - Amendment of Statutes
  - Style of gown and hood

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/aad/studentregistry/data/pos/>

## **Annex L**

Oxford Learning Institute  
University of Oxford

### **Guidance on writing programme aims and intended learning outcomes**

Programme aims and intended learning outcomes are formal ways of describing what teachers are trying to achieve and what you want students to learn. They help you:

- clarify, collectively, among a Faculty, Department or group of tutors your intentions, purposes and educational ethos.
- shape student expectations.
- ensure that curriculum, teaching methods and assessment are all consistent with programme aims and intended outcomes.
- communicate with outside bodies, such as the Quality Assurance Agency.<sup>1</sup>

Statements of aims and of intended learning outcomes can be helpful at all units of instruction, including programmes, papers, modules, and even individual tutorials, lectures or labs. This document focuses on the programme level, but the same principles are applicable to other units of instruction.

#### **Aims: What are you, as teachers, trying to achieve?**

Aims are a general statement of the Faculty or Department's intention for a programme. Statements of aims typically describe, in broad terms:

- the purpose of the programme and what the institution is trying to achieve in providing it.
- the audience for whom the programme is intended.
- the kind of career or future study for which it might prepare students.

A statement of aims might be included in a prospectus or website to help students choose whether it is the right programme for them. In programme materials such as a student handbook, the statement of aims:

- helps shape students' expectations of the programme and their teachers.
- ensures everyone involved with the programme – tutors, lecturers and examiners – shares an understanding of the programme's purpose.

Here are examples of statements of aims, drawn from programme specifications at Oxford:

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<sup>1</sup> For each subject, the Quality Assurance Agency has coordinated the development of a UK-wide set of programme expectations, which is contained in the Quality Assurance Agency' subject benchmark statements.<sup>1</sup> The QAA subject benchmark statements are intended to provide a resource to support institutions in developing their own programmes, whilst ensuring that a common standard is met across the sector. They can be found at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>

### Educational Aims of the MEng in Materials Science

- To provide a course of the highest academic quality in Materials Science in a challenging and supportive learning environment that attracts the very best students from the UK and elsewhere.
- To provide students with a broad, balanced knowledge of Materials Science, supported by the necessary background science.
- To develop transferable skills related to problem solving, communication, practical experimentation, and computing.
- To bring students to a position on graduation that allows them to choose confidently from many different careers, whether within Materials Science or not, and enables them to contribute rapidly to their chosen employment. This includes bringing them to a position to start graduate study for a research degree at a leading university either in the UK or overseas.

### Educational Aims of the BA in Geography

The programme aims to provide:

- A coherent compulsory core syllabus focussed upon the ways in which relationships between people and the natural environment and patterns of spatial relationships vary across the globe and have changed through time.
- An understanding of how these relationships produce the distinctiveness of particular places, landscapes, and patterns of environmental and human attributes.
- The ability to conceptualise these relationships and their outcomes at a range of scales, from the global to the local.
- Awareness of how geographical knowledge and understanding, and therefore current beliefs about issues such as environmental change and global inequalities, are related to the means of depiction, conceptualisation and analysis employed.
- The opportunity to specialise in particular branches of physical and/or human geography to discover the relationships between geography and kindred disciplines at and near the frontiers of research, and develop the technical capacity to advance those frontiers.
- The acquisition of the skills relevant to the further advancement of professional geographical understanding, which are transferable to a wide range of life experiences and employment contexts.

### Outcomes: What do we want students to be able to DO?

This question shifts the perspective from what *teachers* will do to what *students* will do. The focus is on *student learning*. Higher learning involves significant, long-lasting change in an individual's capacity or capability. Learning, then, is more than just an accumulation of additional information. Rather, it involves being able to *do* something with new knowledge or information or to *be* different as a result of the educational experience. Statements that describe what you want students to learn (i.e. be able to do) are called intended learning outcomes. They are:

- sufficiently high-level enough to endure routine updates to programme contents.
- written in terms of what the student is able to *do*.
- challenging and set high expectations.
- not comprehensive of *everything* a student may learn on a programme. Students may grow in desirable ways (such as becoming passionate about a subject or more confident), that you may not want to *demand* of all students. Students may also gain

unintended benefits, such as making friends or learning to read more quickly, but you might not wish to enshrine those potential effects in programme outcomes.

Intended learning outcomes are typically written in bullet points that:

- complete the unfinished sentence, “By the end of the programme, students will be able to...”
- are specific and can be assessed (e.g. in writing, speaking or performances).
- begin with an action verb. (e.g. describe, explain, apply, analyse, evaluate, create, design, critique, diagnose, formulate).
- clarify how students will use new knowledge by identifying precise intellectual, affective or motor skills required of students. Some skills are more challenging than others. (e.g. Being able to *summarise* a theory is easier than *critiquing* the theory or *developing* one’s own theory, for example.) The choice of wording signals the kind and complexity of the task involved.
- avoid words that do not help clarify how knowledge is to be used, such as “learn”, “know”, “understand”.

Statements of learning outcomes help in:

- providing coherence across a programme.
- guiding the design and teaching of particular papers, modules, lectures and formative activities to ensure they contribute to the overall programme outcomes.
- clarifying what students need to practice during the programme and, therefore, the teaching approaches and methods used. (e.g. Do they need to practice “interpreting complex experimental data” or “connecting theoretical ideas...to current debates and events”?)
- choosing methods of assessment that test whether the students can do what they are expected to be able to do.
- communicating to students what is expected of them so they can direct their study accordingly.
- enabling an institution to determine whether the programme is meeting its aims.

Educational development staff in the Oxford Learning Institute are happy to provide individual consultations with programme leaders who are writing or revising programme aims and learning outcomes or designing or revising programmes. See:

<https://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/contact/>

### Some Examples of Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this programme, students will be able to:

#### 1. Humanities Examples

- a) Exercise independence of mind and a readiness to challenge and criticize accepted opinions. (History)
- b) Think critically and in an historicized manner about the complex relationship between literary texts and their social, political, cultural and other relevant contexts. (English)
- c) Choose and describe the most enduring problems in philosophy (Philosophy).
- d) Distinguish between valid and invalid philosophical arguments (Philosophy).
- e) Conduct art historical research, interpreting art work and integrating appropriate secondary sources. (Art History)
- f) Apply feminist theory to contemporary social problems, using the work of major figures in the field. (Women's Studies)

#### 2. Social Science examples

- a) Make a reasoned choice between rival answers to legal questions. (Law)
- b) Bring together information derived from a number of different sources, distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant, and create a coherent synthesis. (Law)
- c) Apply qualitative and quantitative research skills to the study of specific problems in development contexts. (International Development)
- d) Critically integrate insights from economics, politics and/or anthropology to the study of developing countries both at the macro and micro levels. (International Development)
- e) Connect the theoretical ideas learnt in the course to current debates and events as they appear in policy documents and the international press. (International Development)
- f) Identify precisely the underlying issues in a wide variety of academic debates, and to distinguish relevant and irrelevant considerations. (PPE)
- g) Engage in debate with others, to formulate and consider the best arguments for different views and to identify the weakest elements of the most persuasive views. (PPE)
- h) Recognise and analyse contexts in which relations of power, gender, ethnicity, racism and exclusion affect the forms taken by human communities. (Anthropology QAA benchmark statement).

#### 3. Medical Sciences

- a) Appraise scientific information and advice for quality and impartiality. (science in public policy)
- b) Interpret scientific information for its applications to science policy in the context of uncertainty. (science in public policy)
- c) Identify the underlying physical principle in a biomedical sciences/physiology context. (physics of medicine).
- d) Explore and own their personal responses and feelings regarding topics such as stillbirth, termination, sexuality. (Obstetrics and Gynaecology)
- e) Perform a rheumatological examination of a patient's hands, with an appreciation for validated assessments of disease activity (and their use in guiding treatment).
- f) Diagnose rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis and lupus on the basis of clinical features and interpretation of data (inflammatory response, RF, CCP and ANA antibodies).
- g) Formulate a management plan for polyarthritis, demonstrating awareness of the contra-indications and side effects of steroids and the commonly used disease-modifying agents (methotrexate and sulphasalazine).
- h) Respect the contributions of the multi-disciplinary team in the management of polyarthritis.
- i) Discuss a diagnosis and management plan with a patient with polyarthritis. (science in public policy)
- j) Develop ways to help reduce the effects of stress (in managing life and death situations as a doctor).

#### 4. MPLS Examples

- a) Solve a range of known problems and tackle unseen and more open-ended ones. (Materials)
- b) Collate, analyse and interpret complex experimental data and infer conclusions where appropriate. (Materials)
- c) Select and apply appropriate mathematical methods for modelling and analysing engineering problems. (Engineering)
- d) Use scientific principles in the development of engineering solutions to practical problems. (Engineering)
- e) Use scientific principles in the modelling and analysis of engineering systems, processes and products. (Engineering)
- f) Select and apply appropriate computer based methods for modelling and analysing engineering problems and the ability to assess the limitations of particular cases. (Engineering)
- g) Analyse systems, processes and components requiring engineering solutions. (Engineering)
- h) Create new processes or products through the synthesis of ideas from a wide range of sources. (Engineering)
- i) Apply and adapt design methodologies in unfamiliar situations. (Engineering)

## **Annex M**

### **Proposal for a part-time version of a full time postgraduate course**

This template is based on one prepared by the Social Sciences Division and is included in the *Policy and Guidance* as an indication of the key sections of the main course proposal template (Annex A) and additional questions that are particularly relevant to part-time versions of full-time courses. This template should be used with reference also to the main template in Annex A.

#### **1. Academic grounds**

Describe the context and reasons for proposing the introduction of a part-time version/route at this time. Include if relevant: the need to meeting funding body requirements, demand from particular types of students, department strategy to diversify etc.

#### **2. Evidence of demand**

Include:

- whether this is (a) requirement to improve access in accordance with funding body requirements and/or (b) details of pool of candidates likely to be interested in programme(s), including evidence from enquiries/competitors etc.
- the likely location of students, bearing in mind requirements for regular face-to-face attendance in Oxford (e.g. those living within 1-2 hours of Oxford, M4 corridor, London, Birmingham etc).
- information about equality considerations including possible impact on diversity and access/widening participation.

#### **3. Course design, teaching and supervisory methods, student numbers organisation and administration**

Explain the:

- current full-time programme structure alongside an explanation of proposed part-time version.
- relative work-load each term between part-time and full-time (part-time students should have half the load in any given year (and ideally term)). If there are slight variations between terms, these need to be clear to applicants and an explanation provided of, and for, them.
- any patterns of delivery (e.g. distance learning elements) that are outside of the normal 8-week/3-term structure.
- any potential advantages/disadvantages for full-time students of introducing part-time students into the cohort (e.g. increased diversity/experience, impact of any changes in timings associated with necessary adjustments).
- intended level of recruitment and the impact on teaching/assessment resources and dissertation supervisor availability (needed over a 2-year period) (PGT), supervisory capacity (PGR) and admin support (PGT and PGR). Include a table of the growth of part-time cohort over time in comparison with full-time numbers, this is particularly important for PGR programmes as while recruitment may be small over time the numbers accumulate.
- how the needs of part-time students have been taken into account, e.g.



- Enhanced induction (recognising that part-time students may be returning to study after a period away and require additional support with writing, academic good practice skills etc).
- Information about how they will be integrated into the full-time community (e.g. clear expectations at point of application, requirement to attend induction, in Oxford for a minimum of XX days per year (PGR)/week (PGT), scheduling of seminars to help enable attendance, membership of real and virtual communities, use of IT to improve accessibility to material (particularly PGT), amendments to student representative structures to capture this group's views.
- How students might be encouraged to remain engaged with their studies in the period between the first and second year.

Confirm:

- that learning outcomes will be the same.
- that teaching/supervisory methods are the same or, where different, a rationale is provided.
- that requirements for taught components and assessment are the same or, where different, an explanation of those differences and rationale for them.
- the feedback arrangements to students.
- that ordering of teaching (PGT) and/or methods of delivery (including PGR) will not impact disproportionately negatively on part-time students. Departments should consider, for example, the time between methods training and the need for students to use this learning in dissertations/theses and the ordering of the delivery of material (e. g. to ensure that all students receive foundational material in the early stages of their programmes and more overarching/connecting material in the later stages)
- that handbooks will be amended to incorporate part-time information.

In addition for part-time DPhils, clarification of:

- Experience of supervisors in supporting this mode of study (from previous institutions, cases of part-time study agreed for parental leave/disability reasons).
- Confirmation of those who will be assigned as supervisors and thus are likely to remain in place for the longer period needed (e.g. permanent academic staff).
- Confirmation of whether all part-time students will have two supervisors (to minimise the impact of sabbaticals and risk of one leaving during the period of study).
- Information about additional ways in which students can be supported, e.g. regular email communication, skype meetings etc). Departments may wish to consider whether increased points of contact, beyond the minimum supervisions recommended by the University, could be helpful for progression.
- Scope to provide teaching opportunities (recognising that this can already be a challenge for some departments).

#### **4. Assessment**

For PGT confirmation of the timing of assessment, re-sit practices and rationale for any differences between the full- and part-time modes.

For PGR confirmation of the timing of Transfer and Confirmation and final assessment of the thesis.

## **5. Learning development, skills training and employability**

For PGT and PGR, any adaptations to support the development of IT capabilities, language, generic skills training / development, and employability.

## **6. Recruitment and admissions**

Confirmation that admissions criteria are identical to full-time requirements.

Details of the information for part-time students about the time and other requirements of the course (including any potential fieldwork) to enable applicants to make informed decisions about managing these expectations in the context of other their commitments. Please also provide details of where/how this will be communicated (websites/handbooks etc).

## **7. Colleges places**

It is expected that overall part-time numbers are likely to be small (see section 3). Departments will need to confirm that at least three colleges have agreed to accept part-time students, and provide details of these.

## **8. Tuition fees and additional course costs**

Departments to confirm that fees would be charged at 0.5 the standard course rate as per the Planning and Resources Committee general agreement.

Information should be provided about any additional course costs. Prospective applicants should be made aware of the need for them to cover travel expenses and overnight accommodation (as appropriate).

## **9. Facilities and other physical resources**

Departments to include information about resources for part-time students, including working space, remote access to required library resources/study materials, social provision, opportunities to work with staff and other graduates.

## **10. Consultation**

Details of any consultation with departments (including Continuing Education) which have experience of delivering part-time programmes.

## Annex N Guidance note on types of course changes

### Examples of course changes: categorisation in relevant University policy documents and approval level required

<b>Very minor changes</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Categorisation in <i>P&amp;G new courses</i>: <b>n/a</b></li> <li>• Categorisation in <i>P&amp;G new courses - Annex I (Vested Interests)</i>: <b>Type 1 (Changes with no impact or only benefit to students)</b></li> <li>• Description in web text about course changes on Admissions websites: <b>n/a</b></li> </ul>					
Example of change	Approval required if:		Is there a requirement to engage with <u>current students</u> about the changes before they are decided/agreed?	What communication of the change (once decided/agreed) is required with <u>applicants</u> ?	What communication of the change (once decided/agreed) with <u>current students</u> ?
	change being made to affect <u>current students</u> <sup>1</sup>	change being made for <u>next cohort of students</u>			
Small change to the wording in the Examination Regulations, e.g. to correct a minor error or to improve the understandability.	Divisional approval (because all Reg changes go to divisions for approval) <sup>2</sup>		No requirement, but if Regs or handbook are being redrafted to improve understandability, getting student input would be good practice.	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students should be informed of the change.</li> <li>• Communication to students can be via existing channels (e.g. by email/newsletter).</li> <li>• Changes to handbooks should be made clear through the version control table.</li> </ul>
Small change to the way the course is described in the course handbook, e.g. to correct a minor error or to improve the understandability.	None				
Revision to the title (but not the substance) of a paper (e.g. 'The anthropology of medicine' to 'Medical anthropology').	Divisional approval if Regs changing.		Discussion at the JCC would be good practice.		
Extension of a submission deadline (unless it causes deadlines to become clustered).					
Addition of reading time in an examination.					
Formal or cosmetic change to Regulations or course handbook to reflect current practice (e.g. overdue correction to the prescribed edition of a set text).			None		
Confirmation of available options where students and applicants are clearly advised that not all options will be offered in all years.			None		

<b>Minor changes applicable to students who have not yet started the examination, applicants in the cycle or future intakes</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Categorisation in <i>P&amp;G new courses</i>: <b>Minor changes</b></li> <li>• Categorisation in <i>P&amp;G new courses - Annex I (Vested Interests)</i>: <b>Type 2 (Changes with a material or negative impact for students)</b></li> <li>• Description in web text about course changes on Admissions websites: “<b>material change</b>”</li> </ul> <p>N.B. multiple changes of this type are likely to be considered a ‘<b>Major change</b>’; changes of this type made for students currently studying, but not for the examination concerned, should be made with caution.<sup>1</sup></p>					
Example of change	Approval required if:		Is there a requirement to engage with <u>current students</u> about the changes before they are decided/agreed?	What communication of the change (once decided/agreed) is required with <u>applicants</u> ?	What communication of the change (once decided/agreed) with <u>current students</u> ?
	change being made to affect <u>current students</u> <sup>1</sup>	change being made for <u>next cohort of students</u>			
Addition of ‘option’ papers where this takes before the relevant deadline given in course handbooks or the subject-specific Exam Regs.	Division	Division	None	None	Students should be informed of the available options.
Addition of specific ‘option’ papers where this is proposed to take place after the deadline given in course handbooks or the subject-specific Exam Regs.	Division	n/a	None	n/a	Students should be informed of the available options.
Removal of specific ‘option’ papers (whether or not this requires a change to the relevant Exam Regs)	n/a (see below)	Division	None	None	n/a (see below)
Addition or deletion of an element of the syllabus (i.e. material change to the course content)	Changes to assessment including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase, decrease or rebalancing of assessment workload</li> <li>• Change in assessment schedule (e.g. movement of submission deadlines)</li> <li>• Change in assessment methodology (e.g from timed examination to submitted essay or vice versa) as long as not novel form of assessment</li> </ul>		Yes, to be undertaken through normal mechanisms, i.e. discussion at JCC or equivalent – this is to gather student input on the proposal, not because the actual students will be affected, exercise greater caution where students would be affected in a later part of the course.	Applicants in the cycle should be notified and given the option to withdraw if the change affects information applicants have already been provided with e.g. on the graduate admissions or department website, prospectus, brochures, open days etc. Check all this information before you decide whether you will need to contact applicants.	n/a (see below)
Creation of an option exit award, e.g. students can choose to leave after Y3 with a BA but there is no new progression hurdle for continuation to Y4					
Change in assessment or teaching methodology if a novel form (i.e. one not used on other courses at the same level (UG/PGT) in the University already) is planned.	n/a	EdC			n/a

<b>Minor changes applicable to students who have started the examination</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Categorisation in <i>P&amp;G new courses</i>: <b>Minor changes</b></li> <li>• Categorisation in <i>P&amp;G new courses - Annex I (Vested Interests)</i>: <b>Expedited Type 2 (Changes with a material or negative impact for students)</b></li> <li>• Description in web text about course changes on Admissions websites: “<b>material change</b>”</li> </ul>					
<b>Example of change</b>	<b>Approval required if:</b>		<b>Is there a requirement to engage with <u>current students</u> about the changes before they are decided/agreed?</b>	<b>What communication of the change (once decided/agreed) is required with <u>applicants</u>?</b>	<b>What communication of the change (once decided/agreed) with <u>current students</u>?</b>
	<b>change being made to affect <u>current students</u><sup>1</sup></b>	<b>change being made for <u>next cohort of students</u></b>			
A change like those in the first four rows of ‘minor change applicable to students who have not yet started the examination, applicants in the cycle or future intakes’ above where the change is to be made for students who have already begun studying for the examination concerned  (see Annex I of <i>P&amp;G new courses</i> for more details)	EdC	n/a	Consultation with individual students must occur, and the results be reported to EdC when requesting the change.	n/a	Students should be informed of the change and the department should take additional measures to ensure that students are aware of the change.

<b>Major changes</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Categorisation in <i>P&amp;G new courses</i>: <b>Major Changes</b></li> <li>• Categorisation in <i>P&amp;G new courses - Annex I (Vested Interests)</i>: <b>Type 3 (Fundamental change)</b></li> <li>• Description in web text about course changes on Admissions websites: “<b>very substantial changes</b>”</li> </ul>					
<i>Note: the two lines marked * have been moved from Type 2 to Type 3 in revisions to the Vested Interests guidance during summer 2015.</i>					
Example of change	Approval required if:		Is there a requirement to engage with <u>current students</u> about the changes before they are decided/agreed?	What communication of the change (once decided/agreed) is required with <u>applicants</u> ?	What communication of the change (once decided/agreed) with <u>current students</u> ?
	change being made to affect <u>current students</u> <sup>1</sup>	change being made for <u>next cohort of students</u>			
Change of course title	n/a (such changes will not be made to affect current students)	EdC	Through normal mechanisms, i.e. discussion at JCC or equivalent – this is to gather student input on the proposal, not because the actual students will be affected.	Preferably such changes would be agreed for implementation only for the next application cycle. If the changes are to apply to applicants already in the cycle, all applicants should be notified and given the option to withdraw.	n/a (such changes will not be made to affect current students)
Significant restructuring or change in the course content					
Addition or removal of a core paper *					
Change of a paper from core to option or vice versa *					
Introduction of, or raising of, a programme hurdle, e.g. only students achieving a 2.1 are allowed to progress to Y4					
Multiple changes of the type described as ‘Minor changes’ above, of which the combined effect is such that you judge that applicants and students would perceive the total change as substantial.					
Closure of a current course	n/a	EdC	Through normal mechanisms, i.e. discussion at JCC or equivalent – this is to gather student input on the proposal, not because the actual students will be affected.	EdC will not approve changes less than 3 months before applicants are due to start their course.	n/a
Brand new course				n/a	

**Notes:**

**1:** ‘current students’ in this context means those who have already started the first term of the course of study *for the examination concerned*. See paragraphs 6 and 7 of Annex I of the *P&G new courses*. While changes are permitted to later parts of a course which has multiple Parts (or to the FHS for students currently on the FPE), this should be undertaken with caution, given the reliance which students are entitled to place on the original description of the course that they have been given by the institution.

**2:** the General Regulations of the *Examination Regulations* (e.g. Section 2 paragraph 3.4) say that all Special Regulation changes are subject to approval by or on behalf of Education Committee. This approval responsibility is in some cases delegated to Divisions and this is stated in Education Committee’s Standing Orders (EdC(HT17)006):

Education Committee has agreed to delegate authority, subject to periodic reports to the committee as appropriate, to make, amend or repeal regulations concerning courses and examinations for undergraduate, graduate or other students, under regulation 2.4.(1) of Council Regulations 15 of 2002 as follows:

- Regulations for a new course, together with the course proposal itself, may be approved by the PVC (Education). Further minor amendments to regulations for a new course previously approved by the committee may be approved by the PVC (Education) or officers of Education Policy Support<sup>1</sup>;
- Major changes to the special regulations for existing courses may be approved by the PVC (Education) or officers of Education Policy Support;
- Minor changes to the special regulations for existing courses may be approved by divisional boards or individuals with delegated authority of the board<sup>2</sup>; and
- Changes to the general regulations may be approved by the PVC (Education), subject to prior discussion as appropriate with the relevant Panel of Education Committee and the Proctors.

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<sup>1</sup> In practice, draft *Examination Regulations* for a new course are provided by a division alongside the course proposal when it is submitted for consideration by or on behalf of Education Committee. The actual draft regulations are not presented to the committee or the PVC (Education), but scrutinised by EPS officers on behalf of Education Committee once the course proposal has been approved.

<sup>2</sup> This means that departments and faculties must seek divisional approval for all changes to the *Examination Regulations*.

**Annex O: Framework for the planning and development of new courses (2017-18 onwards)**

<b>Sections of Annex O</b>		<b>Source</b>
Section 1	New framework for the planning and development of new courses	EdC(TT17)058 Annex A (slightly revised after EdC TT17 wk8 meeting)
Section 2	Guidance note for divisions on the divisional gathered field exercise for 2019-20 year of entry	Note issued by Director of EPS on 26 June 2017
Section 3	Template for submission of an outline proposal for a new course (for use in the divisional gathered field for 2019-20 year of entry)	EdC(TT17)058 Annex B (slightly revised after EdC TT17 wk8 meeting)
Section 4	Note on the relationship between the annual SNP round and the new courses planning framework	EdC(TT17)058 Annex C
Section 5	SNP timetable for 2019-20 entry	EdC(TT17)058 Annex D
Section 6	Indicative SNP timetable for 2020-21 entry	EdC(TT17)058 Appendix to Annex C



## **Section 1: New framework for the planning and development of new courses**

### ***Guiding principles***

1. The new framework is governed by three key principles:
  - the size and shape of the University's taught and research degree provision should be led by academic priorities;
  - the relative importance and priority for the development of new courses should be judged against both institutional criteria and divisional strategic priorities; and
  - some institution-wide headroom for modest growth is necessary to enable and encourage the introduction of innovative new courses.

### ***Main elements***

2. The new framework has three main elements:
  - a gathered field exercise run by each division to consider all proposals for new courses emanating from departments/faculties within the division, or in collaboration with departments/faculties of other divisions;
  - central review and endorsement of divisional priorities for new courses by a panel of Education Committee; and
  - provision of some institution-wide headroom for modest growth in student numbers for endorsed priorities for new courses.

#### ***A. Divisional gathered field exercise***

##### ***Conduct of gathered field exercise***

3. Each of the four divisions will conduct a gathered field exercise to evaluate proposals for new courses from constituent departments/faculties, in the light of institutional criteria set by a panel of Education Committee, and divisional strategies. Each division will identify their priorities for new courses, and for the award of any additional student numbers needed for particular courses.

##### ***Scope of gathered field exercise***

4. All proposals for new courses (as defined below) will need to go through the gathered field exercise, whether additional student numbers are needed or the planned student numbers can be met through redistribution. This is to ensure that all such proposals are evaluated in a consistent and coherent way and prioritised against institutional criteria.

##### ***Consideration of proposals for new cross-divisional courses***

5. Any proposal for a new course that will be jointly delivered across more than one division will need to be submitted to the gathered field exercise of each relevant division. The proposal will need to be made with the consent of all relevant heads of department. It will not be necessary for the proposal to be given priority by all the divisions involved. However, it will be necessary for the division of the lead department to give priority to the proposal and for the relevant heads of department to agree to the workload and resource implications of the proposal.

Consideration of proposals for new courses from the Department for Continuing Education

6. Any proposal developed by the Department for Continuing Education in conjunction with a division will be submitted to the gathered field exercise of the relevant division. Any standalone proposal by the Department for Continuing Education will be submitted to the gathered field exercise of the division responsible for the relevant discipline, similar to the procedure followed for applications to the John Fell Fund.

Definition of new courses for the purpose of the gathered field exercise

7. For the purpose of the divisional gathered field exercise, proposals for new courses will encompass all proposals for new matriculated courses, regardless of mode (full-time and part-time) or level of study (UG, PGT and PGR), with the exception of proposals for part-time variants of full-time PGT and PGR courses (see below).

Exemptions from the gathered field exercise

8. Proposals for part-time variants of full-time PGT and PGR courses will not be required to go through the gathered field exercise (but will still be required to go through the standard quality assurance processes). This exemption will apply to, but not be limited to, proposals that arise as a requirement of funding from a DTC or DTP bid to a Research Council.
9. However, as an exception to this exemption, any proposal for a part-time variant that requires additional student numbers, i.e. where the planned student numbers cannot be met through redistribution (including through the *virement* of full-time numbers to part-time numbers), the proposal will need to go through the gathered field exercise.

Institutional criteria for new courses

10. Institutional criteria will be set by a panel of Education Committee to take account of institutional strategic priorities. Building on the approach adopted by the VC's Forum, particular weight will be attached in the first instance to 'innovation', to encourage the development of new courses that exploit the University's strengths, address new interdisciplinary fields of study and respond to global challenges.

Review of institutional criteria

11. Institutional criteria will be reviewed regularly by a panel of Education Committee in the light of changing internal and external circumstances and institutional strategic priorities.

**B. Central review and endorsement**

Purpose of the central review

12. Following completion of the divisional gathered field exercise, divisions will submit all prioritised proposals for new courses, including any proposals requiring additional student numbers, to Education Committee for review and endorsement. The central review will confirm that proposals for new courses conform to the agreed institutional criteria for new courses and will determine any additional student intake places required, consistent with the concept of institution-wide headroom for modest growth (see section C below).

Composition of Education Committee panel

13. In place of the VC's Forum in the pilot exercise conducted in 2016-17, the central review and endorsement will be conducted by a panel of Education Committee, chaired by the

PVC Education and comprising representatives of the divisions and the Conference of Colleges.

Detailed planning and approval of new courses

14. Proposals that have been prioritised through the gathered field exercise and endorsed in the central review may then proceed to detailed planning and approval in accordance with standard quality assurance processes<sup>1</sup>.

**C. Headroom for modest growth**

Purpose and scope of the headroom

15. To encourage and enable innovation, some institution-wide headroom for modest growth in student numbers will be permitted, which will have had due regard to resource implications. It will be available to meet, in full or in part, planned student numbers associated with new courses that have been prioritised through the divisional gathered field exercises and endorsed in the central review by the panel of Education Committee.

Exclusions from the headroom

16. In limited cases, certain additional student numbers (whether for the introduction of new courses or for the expansion of existing courses) will not count towards the calculation of the headroom, in order for divisions to be able to respond quickly and flexibly to external schemes and competitions for additional funded student places. These additional student numbers will include PGR doctoral training places made available through RCUK or similar external doctoral training schemes, or result from revisions to government sponsored training schemes e.g. PGCE and UG medicine courses.

Calculation of additional student numbers for purpose of the headroom

17. For the purposes of the headroom, additional student numbers will apply to intake (as opposed to population). Additional student numbers will be calculated on a FTE (rather than headcount) basis.
18. There will be no inbuilt growth in the size of the course: any numbers for expansion needed beyond the agreed initial intake will need to be met through redistribution, as with other proposals for expansion.

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<sup>1</sup> Proposals for new courses endorsed by divisions through the gathered field exercise and confirmed by the central review process will be worked up by the relevant department(s) for scrutiny by divisions (including review by external experts and the relevant committee of Conference) and approval by Education Committee in accordance with established quality assurance procedures.

## **Section 2: Guidance note for divisions on the divisional gathered field exercise for 2019-20 year of entry**

### **Introduction**

1. This guidance note is intended to assist divisions in the running of the gathered field exercises for the consideration of new course proposals for the 2019-20 year of entry.

### **Key dates for coming round**

2. The timetable for the next student number planning round, incorporating the new process for the consideration of new course proposals starting in 2019-20, is at Section 5. As previously noted, this timetable has been compressed. Key dates for the new courses process are:

Step	Deadline
Departments to send completed templates for new course proposals to divisions	<b>20 October 2017</b> (end of week 2, MT17)
Divisions to send prioritised proposals to EdC panel	<b>3 November 2017</b> (end of week 4, MT17)
EdC panel to notify divisions of its decisions	<b>17 November 2017</b> (end of week 6, MT17)

### **Template**

3. The template at Section 3 should be completed for each new course proposal considered in the gathered field exercise, and to identify priorities. All prioritised proposals submitted by the division, following the gathered field exercise, to the Education Committee panel must be completed **in full**.

### **Finding student numbers through redistribution**

4. Where possible, student numbers required for new courses should be found through redistribution from existing courses. Each new course proposal must indicate the steps taken and attempts made to find the required student numbers through redistribution. This will be particularly important for any proposals put forward for consideration by the panel of Education Committee.

### **Conduct of the gathered field**

5. It will be for each division to decide how best to conduct the gathered field exercise. Some may choose to convene a panel to consider applications. Some may invite departmental representatives to attend a meeting of the panel or other body to speak to applications.

### **Written record**

6. Each division is expected to keep a written record of its deliberations and decisions.

### **Applications by the Department for Continuing Education**

7. Any application submitted by the Department for Continuing Education to the divisional gathered field exercise, either standalone proposal or proposal submitted jointly with a department/faculty, should be treated on the same basis as other applications submitted.

#### **Size of headroom for modest growth for 2019-20**

8. For the coming compressed round i.e. for 2019-20 year of entry, divisions should be guided by the volume of additional student intake places endorsed by the VC's Forum for 2018-19 entry, i.e. some **120** additional places for new courses starting in 2018-19 and 2019-20. The precise number of additional student intake places to be recommended to JSNSPC will emerge from the Education Committee panel's scrutiny of prioritised proposals submitted by divisions, having due regard to resource implications and capacity constraints across the collegiate University.
9. In future, and subject to the outcome of the review after three years (i.e. in the course of 2019-20), it is envisaged that, in the light of four years' data and experience of the new framework in operation, the size of the headroom will be set in advance of the gathered field exercises, having due regard to past decisions as well as the resource implications and capacity constraints across the collegiate University.

#### **Number of prioritised proposals for submission for central review**

10. Taking into account the size of the headroom that is likely to be available for 2019-20 entry, divisions should submit a maximum of **three** separate new course proposals, either standalone or in conjunction with other departments/faculties and/or the Department for Continuing Education.

#### **Action following notification of results of central review**

11. Results of the central review will be notified to divisions in early December. Following notification of the results, divisions will be expected to:
  - Notify relevant departments/faculties of the results;
  - Include in their returns to the annual student number planning round details of any additional student intake places recommended by the Education Committee panel; and
  - Work with relevant departments/faculties to ensure the proper development, scrutiny and approval of new course proposals endorsed by the Education Committee panel<sup>2</sup>, in accordance with established quality assurance processes<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Future rounds**

12. The intention is that the gathered field exercises should be held annually. Following the coming transitional year (for new courses for 2019-20 entry), the next round of gathered field exercises (for new courses for 2010-21 entry) is scheduled to take place in Trinity term 2018<sup>4</sup>. Further details about that round will be provided in Hilary term 2018, once the outcomes of the current round for 2019-20 entry are known.

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<sup>2</sup> It will be necessary to expedite this process as much as possible given the compressed timetable: proposals for new courses for 2019-20 entry will need to be approved by Education Committee by the end of TT18.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses/>

<sup>4</sup> The standard timetable be reviewed in the light of experience of the Trinity term 2018 round.

### **Section 3: Template for submission of an outline proposal for a new course (for use in the divisional gathered field for 2019-20 year of entry)**

#### **PREAMBLE**

This template should be completed for **each** proposal for a new course starting in 2019-20 that originates in a department or faculty within the division, or in partnership with a department or faculty in another division and/or with the Department for Continuing Education. Any proposal for a course involving significant contributions from multiple departments/faculties will need to be considered in the gathered field exercise run by each relevant division.

#### **Scope of the process**

<b>Included</b>	<b>Not included</b>
All proposals for new matriculated courses, regardless of level of study (UG, PGT, PGR) and mode of study (full-time or part-time)	Proposals for major changes to existing courses
Proposals for part-time variants of existing full-time courses only if they involve a request for additional student intake places.	Proposals for new non-matriculated courses <sup>5</sup>
	Proposals for part-time variants of existing full-time courses if they do <u>not</u> involve a request for additional student intake places.

#### **Length of proposal**

Proposals should be no more than 10 sides in length in total (excluding the instructions below).

#### **1. COURSE SUMMARY**

Title of course	
Level of study (UG, PGT, PGR)	
Mode of study (FT, PT)	
Lead department / faculty (for joint proposals)	
Other departments / faculties involved (for joint proposals)	
External partners (as applicable)	

#### **2. COURSE OUTLINE, ACADEMIC RATIONALE AND FIT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

<sup>5</sup> Student number plans in relation to new and existing non-matriculated courses should continue to be included in divisional returns for the annual student number planning round.

Please provide a brief outline of the course and academic rationale.

Please explain how the new course proposal contributes to meeting institutional (University, divisional and departmental) strategic priorities and objectives, including some or all of the following:

- Building on research, e.g. how does the course proposal exploit existing research strengths and excellence in related research areas?
- Promoting inter- and multi- disciplinary, e.g. how does the course proposal cross subject boundaries, foster new connections between subjects?
- Addressing global challenges, e.g. how does the course proposal equip students to deal with current and future world challenges?
- Extending global reach, e.g. how does the course proposal reach new or wider audiences?
- Promoting access, e.g. how does the course proposal support the University's widening access goals and targets?

### **3. INNOVATION CRITERION**

Please explain how the new course proposal meets the core institutional criterion of innovation for the introduction of new courses.

The proposal must demonstrate an innovative approach in at least one of the following dimensions: content, delivery, links between teaching and research, collaboration between departments/faculties, or involvement with external partners.

### **4. MARKET DEMAND**

What evidence is there that the course proposal would be attractive to high quality candidates? Does this proposal provide Oxford with a competitive edge over peer institutions? What unique selling point does this proposal draw upon?

### **5. STAFFING**

Please provide details of the proposed staffing arrangements for the proposal. This should include:

- Name, position, college and/or departmental affiliation of the lead academic for the proposal (i.e. course director)
- Number and proportion of academic staff teaching on the course on permanent or long-term (>3 year) contracts
- Details of any new academic appointments associated with the proposal
- Workload implications of the proposal for academic staff (in departments/faculties

and colleges) involved in teaching and academic support, and how these will be managed

- Workload implications of the proposal for non - academic staff (in departments/faculties, colleges and University central services) involved in student support services, and how these will be managed

**6. SPACE AND EQUIPMENT**

Please outline the space and equipment implications of the new course proposal, and how these will be addressed. This should cover the resource implications associated with teaching, academic and student support services in the department/ faculty and colleges.

**7. STUDENT FUNDING**

Please outline the student funding arrangements proposed. This should cover the extent and sources of studentship funding, and indicate the proportion of students on the course who would be fully funded.

**8. PLANNED STUDENT NUMBERS**

Please provide details of the planned student intake for the new course proposal, and how these numbers will be met. The default position is that student numbers will be met through redistribution from other courses (either in the department/faculty or elsewhere in the division). Please explain any reasons why this is not possible.

Where the student numbers cannot be met through redistribution from existing courses (including through the *virement* of full-time numbers to part-time numbers), the proposal will need to specify the additional student numbers being sought.

If the proposal is for a course available in both full-time and part-time modes, please indicate the distribution of the total intake number across FT and PT.

Specify the planned intake in the first year of entry. No inbuilt growth may be presumed: any expansion in student intake in subsequent years will need to be met through redistribution, in competition with proposals for expansion with existing courses.

Planned intake numbers	
How will the planned numbers be sourced?	

**9. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND CONSENT OBTAINED**

Please provide details of any consultation undertaken with relevant departments/faculties and colleges, including student groups, in developing the course proposal.

Please confirm that the Head of Department and lead academic staff identified in section 5 have given their consent.



For courses to be jointly delivered with, or involving significant contributions from, other departments/faculties, give details of the relevant head of department/faculty, and confirm that they have given their consent, and agreed to accept the workload implications for their staff. (Evidence of consent required.)

#### **10. DEPARTMENTAL / FACULTY RANKING**

Where the department/faculty submits more than one proposal for a new course, either on its own or jointly with another department/faculty, the ranking of each proposal should also be specified.

Departmental / faculty ranking (as applicable)	
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## **Section 4: Note on the relationship between the annual SNP round and the new courses planning framework**

### **Introduction**

1. This note outlines how the new framework for the planning and development of new courses will align with the annual student number planning round overseen by Joint Student Number Planning Subcommittee (JSNPSC)<sup>6</sup>.

### **Key stages and outcomes of the new courses framework**

2. The new process has two main steps:
  - Step 1: a gathered field exercise run by each division to consider all proposals for new courses<sup>7</sup> emanating from the division, or in collaboration with the division i.e. with another division and/or the Department for Continuing Education. The outcomes of these divisional exercises will then be reported to a panel of Education Committee, chaired by the PVC Education;
  - Step 2: the central review and endorsement of divisional priorities for new courses, emerging from the divisional gathered field exercises, by the panel of Education Committee.
3. The process will have two main outcomes:
  - A set of endorsed priorities for new courses for development, scrutiny and approval by Education Committee in accordance with standard quality assurance processes<sup>8</sup>; and
  - A recommended number of additional student intake places, both full-time and part-time, associated with the endorsed priorities for new courses, for the relevant year of start of the new course.

### **Alignment with annual student number planning round**

4. The recommended number of additional student intake places will inform the annual planning round overseen by JSNPSC. This number will emerge from the rigorous scrutiny of divisional priorities by the panel of Education Committee and will be consistent with the concept of 'institution-wide headroom for modest growth led by academic priorities' agreed by the VC's Forum. It will be used to inform the guidance issued by JSNPSC to divisions in preparing their student number planning returns. It is envisaged that the guidance will stipulate that divisions will need to keep within the agreed planning totals except for:
  - additional student intake numbers recommended by the panel of Education Committee in relation to endorsed priorities for new courses; and

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/pras/committees/jointbodies/jsnpsc/>

<sup>7</sup> Proposals for new courses will encompass *all* proposals for new degree-bearing (matriculated) courses, regardless of mode (full-time and part-time) or level of study (UG, PGT and PGR), with the exception of proposals for part-time variants of full-time PGT and PGR courses.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses/>

- additional student intake numbers (whether for the introduction of new courses or for the expansion of existing courses) accepted by JSNPSC for exceptional cases where the new places are fully funded as part of government initiatives e.g. PGR doctoral training places made available through RCUK or similar external doctoral training schemes, or revisions to government sponsored training schemes, such as PGCE and UG medicine courses.
5. As at present, Divisions will be free to make adjustments in student places between existing courses within the agreed planning totals. Thus, any expansion of an existing course will need to be met through offsetting reductions in other courses.
  6. The new courses process to be managed by the panel of Education Committee will complement, not replace, the student number planning process overseen by JSNPSC. Because the panel of Education Committee will deal only with proposals for new courses, i.e. not proposals for expansion and/or contraction of existing courses, and because divisions and colleges draw up their plans separately, it will still be necessary for JSNPSC to collate and analyse college and divisional plans to ensure that any mismatch in volume and pattern of numbers is addressed and reconciled.
  7. The revised student number planning timetable, with the new complementary steps for new courses added, is shown at Section 6 for illustration. The timing of steps will be reviewed in the light of experience of the operation of the new courses process.

## **Section 5: SNP timetable for 2019-20 entry**

Additional steps relating to the new courses framework are shown in *italics*.

2017

June	<i>Gathered field guidance note and template issued to divisions</i> <i>Divisions call for bids by end September</i>
October	<i>Divisions conduct gathered field exercises</i>
November	<i>Education Committee panel considers outcomes of divisional gathered field exercises. Endorses priorities for new courses for full development &amp; QA scrutiny. Recommends any ‘headroom for modest growth’ figure for 2019-20 SNP round</i>

2018

January	<i>JSNPSC receives details of any recommended headroom for growth figure for 2019-20</i>  <i>JSNPSC receives details of any exceptional cases for growth, proposed or accepted since the previous year’s Letter to Divisions</i>
February	JSNPSC agrees annual Letter to Divisions ( <i>incorporating details of any agreed headroom for growth for 2019-20, and any exceptional cases for growth accepted</i> ) Letter sent to Divisions requesting student number plans (for 2018-19 and 2019-20)
Late March	Deadline for divisional SNP returns
Mid April	Letter sent to Colleges requesting student number plans (with copies of divisional returns to inform their own planning)
Early May	JSNPSC receives divisional SNP returns and commentary
Mid May	Deadline for college SNP returns
Early June	JSNPSC considers and agrees divisional and college SNP returns
June	Outcomes reported to EdC (week 8), Conference of Colleges (week 9), Council (week 9) and PRAC (week 10)

## **Section 6: Indicative SNP timetable for 2020-21 entry**

Additional steps relating to the new courses framework shown in *italics*.

2018

February	<i>Gathered field guidance note and template issued to divisions</i> <i>Divisions call for bids by the beginning of May</i>
May	<i>Divisions conduct gathered field exercises</i>
June	<i>Education Committee panel considers outcomes of divisional gathered field exercises. Endorses priorities for new courses for full development &amp; QA scrutiny. Recommends any ‘headroom for modest growth’ figure for 2020-21 SNP round</i>
November	<i>JSNPSC receives details of recommended headroom for growth figure for 2020-21</i>

2019

January	<i>JSNPSC receives details of any exceptional cases for growth, proposed or accepted since the previous year’s Letter to Divisions</i>
February	JSNPSC agrees annual Letter to Divisions ( <i>incorporating details of agreed modest headroom for growth for 2020-21, and any exceptional cases for growth accepted</i> ) Letter sent to Divisions requesting student number plans (for 2019-20 and 2020-21)
Late March	Deadline for divisional SNP returns
Mid April	Letter sent to Colleges requesting student number plans (with copies of divisional returns to inform their own planning)
Early May	JSNPSC receives divisional SNP returns and commentary
Mid May	Deadline for college SNP returns
Early June	JSNPSC considers and agrees divisional and college SNP returns
June	Outcomes reported to EdC (week 8), Conference of Colleges (week 9), Council (week 9) and PRAC (week 10)