



Procedure for departmental review

Council

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1. Background

- 1.1. Reviews have a central role in the institutional and divisional oversight of the major activities of faculties and departments.
- 1.2. Under arrangements approved by Council, divisions have the first-line responsibility for the monitoring of quality assurance in their faculties and departments and the Education Committee has responsibility to ensure institutional oversight of the overall process.¹
- 1.3. The joint divisional/Education Committee reviews are to cover all aspects of the activities of the faculty/department, and each is to be reviewed every 6 years.
- 1.4. This guidance will be reviewed annually to take into account any relevant developments. It addresses the work involved in undertaking a review under the headings set out on the bar.
- 1.5. The work of review committees is supported by officers from the relevant division and from Education Committee. This note is written primarily to provide them with guidance, although others involved in the process, including those preparing for reviews, may also find it useful.
- 1.6. Additional guidance on specific points can be sought either from divisional or Education Committee officers.

2. Purpose and context

Purpose of reviews - Quality Assurance Agency perspective

- 2.1. Reviews are a formal part of the University's quality assurance regime, for which the University is accountable to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). A key issue in the QAA's Higher Education Review process is to monitor how universities exercise institutional oversight, and in particular, how institutions operate and learn from their own internal monitoring and review processes. In its latest revision of the procedure for reviews, QAA has emphasised the following institutional responsibilities:
 - to set and maintain the threshold standards of its academic awards, and to monitor the effectiveness of the processes involved;
 - to manage the quality of students' learning opportunities, and to monitor the effectiveness of the processes involved;
 - to manage the quality of public information, including that produced for students and applicants, and the effectiveness of the processes involved; and
 - to enhance the quality of students' learning opportunities, and the effectiveness of the processes involved.

¹ Extract from (a) Education Committee Terms of Reference: 'in conjunction with divisions, the administration and oversight of a programme of regular review of the divisions' faculties and departments by reference to international standards of excellence'; (b) Terms of Reference for divisional boards: (4) the periodic strategic review of particular sub-units and (7) the maintenance of educational quality and standards in the broad subject area.

- 2.2. In revising this guidance, attention has been paid to the latest information on QAA reviews of institutions ('Higher Education review plus'), and to the Expectation and Indicators which QAA reviewers will take into account in considering how an institution undertakes periodic review (see Annex D: Joint review outline). The next institutional review by QAA is likely to take place in the academic year 2015-16.

Purpose of reviews - internal perspective

- 2.3. From the internal perspective, reviews are the main vehicle for institutional oversight of the academic (research and teaching) and organisational/financial activities of departments and faculties, in the light of University and divisional strategic priorities. Their purpose is to cast a searching but sympathetic eye over all aspects of faculty/department activities, in order to provide informed support for their further development and improvement, and to identify positive achievements and best practice, which can then be incorporated in the University's quality enhancement strategy.

Responsibility for the review process

- 2.4. The Terms of Reference approved by Council for the review of faculties and departments are set out in Annex A: Template of reviews. Reviews are conducted jointly between the relevant division and the Education Committee, and this is reflected both in the membership of the review committee and in its administrative support.
- 2.5. Matters covered in paragraph 1(b) of the Terms of Reference (see Annex A: Template of reviews) are under the auspices of the Education Committee. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and/or another member of the Education Committee serves as a member of the review committee, and, in consultation with the division, normally takes the role of Deputy Chair. This is in order to ensure effective institutional oversight of quality assurance arrangements and appropriate attention to learning and teaching issues within the review. In organising the work of the review, care should be taken to ensure that teaching and learning issues receive proper weight. (Further guidance on the approach to be taken to teaching and learning matters is given below.)

Outcome of the review

- 2.6. The outcome of reviews is monitored and discussed not only by the faculty/department concerned but by those Council and divisional committees which have a responsibility for assuring quality and an interest in wider lessons under 'Dissemination of review reports'. Specific advice on how best to ensure that recommendations are followed up and that the broader implications of reviews are kept in mind is provided later under 'Preparing and Implementing the Report'.

Early practical considerations

- 2.7. These should include identifying both the resources and the officer time needed for gathering and presenting the required information. Officers will need to take stock of all divisional or other reviews which have focused on aspects of the faculty/department concerned, for example, addressing questions of student numbers or the use of

resources. They should identify sources of information already assembled and enquiries already conducted which can be reported to the committee and taken into account in their deliberations.

- 2.8. Where matters under review have recently been examined by other bodies, e.g. accrediting institutions, the analysis undertaken and the data provided on that earlier occasion may be utilised in the review.
- 2.9. Guidance as to the types of information which may be useful for particular purposes and relevant sources is contained in an outline of the Self-Evaluation Document at Annex B: Framework for self-evaluation.
- 2.10. Adequate lead times for the different operations necessary at each stage are crucial in organising the review. A planning timetable should be drawn up at an early stage. Timing considerations are set out in Annex E: Joint review timing.

3. Review committee composition

Membership of the review committee

- 3.1. Membership of the review committee is a matter for the Divisional Board and the Education Committee to determine jointly. In accordance with the composition of review bodies agreed by Council, membership will normally include the following:
 - (a) Head of Division (in the Chair);
 - (b) Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) and/or another member of the Education Committee (Deputy Chair);
 - (c) Representative of Divisional Board/division external to faculty/department under review;
 - (d - e) No fewer than two reviewers external to the University;
 - (f) Representative of the faculty/department under review;
 - (g) Student representative to be drawn from either the OUSU Vice-President for Access and Academic Affairs or Vice-President (Graduates) also under 'The role of student members'.
- 3.2. Divisions may also wish to consider augmenting the membership with a Senior Tutor to provide information on college concerns. Although this was not an original Council requirement, it has been found useful where, for example, there is particular reliance on the college provision of undergraduate teaching for the subject concerned. This would supplement existing ways of representing college views, i.e. inviting comments from the Senior Tutors' Committee, as well as from individual Senior Tutors (see Additional information and written submissions).
- 3.3. Every effort should be made to achieve a balance in gender representation.

- 3.4. Given that reviews are to be conducted by reference to international standards of excellence, consideration should also be given to including representation on the committee from outside the UK.
- 3.5. Nomination of the representative of the Divisional Board (c) is a matter for the Head of Division and/or the Divisional Board.

The role of external members

- 3.6. The external reviewers (d - e) have a particular role in the review process. It is QAA's specific expectation that scrupulous use will be made of independent external persons in the internal periodic review of disciplines or programmes. It may therefore be appropriate to increase external representation, for example in the case of a large and diverse faculty/department where specific expertise has been identified which would help to strengthen the review committee.
- 3.7. In preparing for the review, thought should be given to:
 - the areas in which external reviewers may be able to make particular contributions, e.g. in learning, teaching and research matters;
 - any special requirements for information which external members without prior knowledge of the University may have and the best means of meeting them. (A note outlining the process which may be useful for briefing external members is at Annex D: Joint review outline. It can be edited as appropriate for particular circumstances.);
 - how internal members of review teams are alerted to the particular weight which is to be attached to the views of external members;
 - how the eventual report can appropriately acknowledge the contribution of the external members in arriving at the recommendations of the committee.
- 3.8. The division should seek recommendations for possible external reviewers from the faculty/department. The latter should take into account and make known any prior links with the recommended individual, including for example employment, past and current research collaborations, and appointment as an external examiner. For two places, three or four recommendations should be provided in order to allow choice, noting the right of the Chair in consultation with the Education Committee to seek advice from elsewhere and to make appointments accordingly. The Education Committee must be satisfied that the external members are sufficiently independent, and any proposal to increase the number of external relative to internal members must be considered in that light.
- 3.9. There is often a long lead time to securing strong external membership of review committees, and availability in the period concerned is a critical factor affecting the timetabling of a review (see Annex E: Joint review timing).

The role of the faculty/departmental member

- 3.10. The review committee will include a representative of the faculty/department under review (f), who may be a current or recently retired member of its academic staff. The person nominated should have experience of the internal operations of the faculty/department. The appointment of the nominee is subject to the agreement of the

Chair of the review committee. The role of this member is primarily to provide guidance when it is sought during the deliberations of the review committee based on working knowledge of the matters under discussion. It is not to act as an advocate for the faculty/department. The committee may decide that it is not appropriate for the representative of the faculty/department to be present during the committee's meetings with staff of the faculty/department to consider career progression and prospects, or with students in the faculty/department. The appointee must also be prepared to accept the limitation that they may not, unless requested to do so, seek guidance from or brief the faculty/department on the committee's deliberations.

The role of student members

3.11. Following extensive consultation, Education Committee agreed a twin-track approach for the year 2012-13. Student members (either the OUSU Vice-President for Access and Academic Affairs or the Vice-President (Graduates)) will participate at all points of a review or take part in the learning and teaching sessions only, at the discretion of the division concerned. On associated issues, the student presence during sensitive business, especially any personnel matters, and attendance at the working dinner, should be matters for the chair of the review committee to decide at his or her discretion. This approach is currently under review.

4. Preparing for review – assembling information

Contents of the self-evaluation document

- 4.1. The core of information made available to the review committee will be contained in the faculty/department's Self Evaluation Document (SED). Relevant information can also be obtained by the officers supporting the review from sources in the University outside the faculty/department. The officers should share these data with the faculty/department, in order that disparities in basic information are avoided and the faculty/department has the opportunity to comment on additional data.
- 4.2. The division and Education Committee, in consultation with the faculty/department, will define the scope of the review, for example the inclusion of a particular centre or joint degree.
- 4.3. An indicative framework for the SED is at Annex B: Framework for self-evaluation.
- 4.4. Faculties/departments may wish to adapt this framework for their own use, but should be asked to use it as the starting point. The following additional points may be of value to them in preparing the SED.
 - It should aim to provide a self-standing description of the faculty/department, its major activities, resources and objectives, and the issues it faces at the time of the review, dealing with the past to the extent that it provides necessary context. Jointly owned or operated facilities and courses which are to be included as part of the review should be clearly identified, with an indication of how responsibilities are shared. The description should include a view of the medium to longer term (five years or more).

- Although grounded in factual information, including that identified in Annex B: Framework for self-evaluation, the SED should be evaluative in its approach, indicating any areas for development or enhancement. The faculty/department should feel free to identify in the SED matters to which it considers the committee should give attention. It may be a useful tool to approach this through a SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) analysis.
- It should refer explicitly to the last full review, and any interim reviews, describing in the case of specific recommendations the follow-up action which has been taken.

Additional information and written submissions

- 4.5. In addition to the SED, the officers supporting the review should seek information from other sources as appropriate. Standard data sets on the student body for each subject area broken down by levels of study and other relevant criteria (and capable of being manipulated using the Tableau System) are available each year after the census date of 1 December. An indication of the headings under which the data is presented is at Annex F: Data sets.
- 4.6. At an early meeting with the Chair, sources from whom a view would normally be sought in writing should be identified, i.e.
- The Chairs of the Senior Tutors' Committee and the Graduate Committee of the Conference of Colleges, copying to the Conference Secretariat;
 - Central Services of the University, which may include Personnel Services, Research Services, IT Services, Estates Services, the Development Office, Academic Services and University Collections (including the Bodleian Libraries, the Language Centre, the University Museums and the Botanic Gardens), Careers Service, Disability Advisory Service, Graduate Admissions and Funding, the Oxford Learning Institute, Planning and Resource Allocation, Student Administration, Student Welfare and Support Services, and Undergraduate Admissions and Outreach, Recruitment and Access.
- 4.7. Requests should be addressed by e-mailed communication to facilitate consultation within the service concerned. Areas for comment might include the following.
- An indication of any significant contacts the service has had with the faculty/department over the review period relevant to the review's terms of reference.
 - Any specific data which it might be useful for the review to see arising out of or related to the service provided to the faculty/department in question; and on contributions the faculty/department makes to areas of activity for which their service is responsible. Information covering a number of years from which trends can be deduced would be of particular value.
 - Any other specific matters (within the terms of reference) which the service would like to see raised with the faculty/department, either from the point of view of their own service or more generally.
- 4.8. On the question of data, services have increasingly been establishing data systems from which relevant data can be drawn down, saving the need for a tailored report. It

may therefore be appropriate for Services to be invited to supply information in that form, where it is more convenient to them to do so and where this information can readily be presented to the review committee.

Gazette notice

4.9. In addition a general advertisement inviting comment is published in the Gazette normally not less than two months before the date of the review (see Annex E: Joint review timing).

4.10. It may also be appropriate to invite comments from:

- a) Senior Tutors in colleges which provide the subject in question;
- b) All faculty/department academic and administrative staff;
- c) Junior members (normally through JCCs);
- d) Any other internal or external persons from whom the committee specifically wishes to seek views.

Timetabling meetings

4.11. The Chair should also be consulted about the meetings with staff and students which are to form a significant proportion of the committee's programme. A draft timetable should be discussed with the Chair as soon as is practicable. Relevant groups should include:

- a) Students – with undergraduates and graduates generally seen separately, on the basis of nominations made by the faculty/department in accordance with guidance given on behalf of the committee;
- b) Officers responsible for the faculty/department's various activities;
- c) Academic staff – with those who have joined within recent years providing a useful comparative perspective; (Staff individually or in groups may ask to be given a hearing by the committee, in which case they should be asked to indicate in writing for consideration by the Chair the ground they wish to cover.)
- d) Other parts of the University with which the faculty/department has a special relationship, for example, in providing joint courses or working closely in other ways.

4.12. The Chair may meet with the head of the faculty/department under review before the review meeting in order to be clear about any key issues or concerns from the faculty/department's viewpoint, or to clarify any points in the SED.

5. Briefing the review committee

Material for members of the review committee

5.1. Wherever possible, information provided should be relevant and accessible without overburdening the members. A sample contents list for a review committee dossier is at Annex C: Sample content.

5.2. Information should be provided to members of the committee normally not less than ten working days before the review. Additional material, to be sent on when available, should also be clearly identified. Members of the committee should also be reminded

that it is provided solely for their own use for the purposes of the review, and must not be shared more widely.

- 5.3. Data might be made available to members through a password-protected website, for example using WebLearn, or marked as available on request. The first of these should be clearly signposted to members, and passwords made available, with a contact name in the event of any difficulties of access.
- 5.4. The short note describing the review procedure which is provided at Annexe D: Joint review outline may be useful, edited as necessary, as a brief for members of review committees who are unfamiliar with Oxford's procedure for reviews.
- 5.5. Members should be told that the eventual review report will normally be for use by senior staff in the faculty/document concerned (although they may choose to share it more widely under suitable restrictions) and by relevant university committees. A synopsis of the final report will be produced which can be given wider circulation inside the collegiate University under 'Dissemination of review reports'.

The briefing paper

- 5.6. Officers should discuss with the Chair the contents of any briefing paper. The written briefing should identify any key areas of information, discussion and strategy which officers wish to highlight for the committee members (see also Annexe G: Briefing paper).
- 5.7. In drafting the brief on aspects related to institutional oversight of quality assurance arrangements and learning and teaching issues within the review, officers may wish to seek guidance from the Chair of the Education Committee or the representative of the Education Committee who is appointed to the committee.

Alternative approach to learning and teaching

- 5.8. With Education Committee agreement, MPLS division has developed the standard procedure for reviews so that teaching and learning issues are given preliminary consideration by a panel. This meets for half a day in advance of the main review meeting. The Panel is chaired by the Associate Head of Division who is responsible for teaching and learning matters at divisional level, and is attended by the representative of Education Committee and the faculty/department and student representatives. The Panel meets with the faculty/department's Directors of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, and with other relevant academic post-holders and administrative staff. Its conclusions are reported as recommendations to the full review committee. The aim has been to free up time on the review days to permit a greater focus on the quality of research, thereby making better use of the expertise of the international external members, who may have less interest in contributing to the detailed discussion of quality assurance arrangements which are often specific to the UK context.
- 5.9. After early pilots of this approach, Education Committee concluded that it was consistent with the objectives originally agreed for Joint Reviews by Council, and that it enabled full consideration to be given to teaching and learning issues in the overall context of the review. Other divisions may wish to consider whether they would want to

include this additional step in their review process, although there is no requirement for them to do so.

6. Meeting days

The approach

- 6.1. Officers should do as much as possible to ensure that all who are involved with the review - not just review committee members and the staff of the unit which is under review but also those providing information or giving evidence - see the experience as a positive one. Experience of earlier reviews suggests that a searching approach is not incompatible with being generally supportive. The areas and recommendations which are ultimately to be covered in the review report should so far as possible receive coverage in the sessions at which the faculty/department discusses issues face to face with the committee. It is reasonable to try to ensure that the conclusions of the committee when they ultimately emerge contain neither major shocks nor surprises.
- 6.2. Not less than a week before the review, officers should meet with the Chair to clarify any points in the dossier, discuss and adjust the timetable and attendance arrangements, and identify any information gaps.

The initial session

- 6.3. The review committee's initial session should allow the members time to discuss and agree their modus operandi. Issues for discussion may include:
 - the timetable;
 - lines of questioning to be pursued;
 - whether and where particular committee members should take the lead;
 - timing and other handling of particular issues;
 - personnel to be present at different sessions;
 - the organisation of sessions involving larger numbers of participants, whether of staff or students;
 - whether the committee wishes to draw on information or sources of evidence additional to what has been provided.
- 6.4. The Chair should also explain to the committee the role of the representative of the faculty/department, as set out under 'the role of the faculty/departmental member', and invite any initial thoughts about sessions at which he or she should be asked not to be present. In addition, an opportunity should be provided for the external members to identify the role which they wish to play. This discussion will be informed by the issues raised in the SED, the chair's brief and/or the divisional overview. Exceptionally this may lead to an adjustment to the timetable which should then be communicated to those involved.

Adjustments to the timetable

- 6.5. The timetable should always allow the committee sufficient spaces in which to discuss their conclusions from each session, and to collect together thoughts where members have conducted discussions bilaterally, for example with staff or students. It should also include a final session at which the committee considers the conclusions it wishes

to reach. It may be helpful for the committee to be provided with a framework for the final report at this session. Clear preliminary agreement at this stage may help obviate the need for later iteration with review committee members by correspondence. Where this is possible, thought should also be given to the ways in which recommendations might be followed up.

7. The report

Preparing the report

7.1. A common format should where possible be followed:

- the terms of reference of the review should be included as an annexe, and a table of contents provided;
- paragraph numbering should be used throughout;
- the text should be broken up with subheadings which relate to the terms of reference (ensuring that there is always an area of the report which addresses teaching and learning and QA issues);
- bold type should be used as a way of highlighting recommendations as they occur in the text, and the recommendations should be collected together in the form of a summary at the end of the report;
- material gleaned from the self assessment document may be attached as an annexe constituting a snapshot of the unit being reviewed;
- reference should be made (using footnotes) to any self-standing documents on which the argument relies;
- a synopsis of the report should be produced, which can be given wider circulation inside the collegiate university.

Timescale for review reports

7.2. Officers supporting the review should agree how the draft report will be produced. In order to maximise the usefulness of reviews, every effort should be made to publish a final report in good time, and it is recommended that the initial draft should be completed within twenty working days and the report be completed within sixty working days of the review meeting taking place. Once the draft is agreed by the Chair (consulting with the representative of the Education Committee as necessary), it may be referred to the faculty/department member of the Committee for comment on points of fact before being sent to all members of the committee for their views. Committee comments on the report should be in the form of specific drafting suggestions.

Dissemination of review reports

7.3. Reports of reviews will not normally be published, either publicly or internally, including on internal websites. However, officers servicing the review will prepare a brief synopsis for approval by the Chair, which can then be made available to Senior Tutors' Committee, to service departments and to others who participated, and which can be circulated within the University as appropriate.

7.4. The general framework for handling the report once it is agreed by the review committee is as follows.

- The report will be made available to the Divisional Board and to the Education Committee (via its Quality Assurance Subcommittee) for information at their first meetings following completion.
- The faculty/department will be invited by the division to consider the report of the review committee as soon as feasible and to provide within two months of the report being received by them (with appropriate adjustment made for intervening vacations) a considered response to the recommendations. The response should include an action plan (with timetable for implementation) in respect of those recommendations with which the faculty/department agrees.
- The Divisional Board will consider the faculty/department's response as soon as possible and formulate its own comments on the report's recommendations and the faculty/department's response to it.
- The Education Committee will receive the report on behalf of the University and will consider it together with the faculty/department's response and divisional comments. In its consideration of the report, Education Committee will (1) assure itself that the process of review had been properly applied; (2) consider whether there are any other matters related to teaching or learning, or to any other matter with which it is concerned, which warrant further examination; and (3) where there are any matters addressed in the report, or in subsequent consideration of it, which need to be drawn to the attention of other committees in the University, including committees of the Conference of Colleges.

7.5. The Divisional Board will consider, in the light of any further comment from the Education Committee amongst others, matters on which it wishes to receive further information (and the timetable for receiving it) in order to monitor follow-up.

Mid-term review

7.6. The Review procedure also incorporates a mid-term review of progress being made by the faculty/department in implementing the recommendations of the review. The process is initiated with the faculty/department by the division. The faculty/department is asked to complete a template, and the return is the subject of a discussion with the faculty/department, conducted jointly by officers of the division and the Education Committee Secretariat. The Board of the division and the Chair of Education Committee will consider the progress being made, and offer any comments as they see fit. The Divisional Board will also consider whether there are any issues arising from one or more of the mid-term reviews which it wishes to raise with Education Committee.

Annexes

Annex A Template of reviews

(Approved by Council 16 June 2006)

1. To review the quality of academic activities in the faculty/department, by reference to:
 - international standards of excellence;
 - action taken since the last review of the faculty/department;
 - planning statements at faculty/department and divisional level, and in the context of the University's Mission Statement and Strategic Plan.

In particular:

- a) the quality of the research of the faculty/department, including its participation in inter-department/faculty, inter-divisional and inter-disciplinary activities, its research profile and strategy, and future challenges and opportunities.
- b) the quality of undergraduate and graduate programmes and their delivery and related issues, including:
 - access and admissions;
 - curriculum design and programme structure;
 - teaching, learning and assessment;
 - the relationship between teaching and research;
 - academic and pastoral support and guidance;
 - the provision and use of learning resources (including staff resources);
 - specific arrangements for the pursuit of graduate studies (including research degrees and research training and provision for part-time study);
 - relationships with colleges;
 - quality assurance mechanisms.
- c) the organisation of the faculty/department, its management structures and the relationship between the faculty/department and the Division and the University's services, including such matters as:
 - strategic planning (including relationship to the divisional five-year plans and the University's Strategic Plan);
 - academic and non-academic staff planning and recruitment;
 - student number planning;
 - terms of appointment for academic staff, including career development and equal opportunities issues;
 - accommodation and future space needs;
 - fundraising;
 - any other matters in which any of the services within Academic Administration Division are involved.

- d) the relationship (structural and operational) between units within the faculty/department, and between the faculty/department and cognate subject areas and colleges to which it is linked in teaching and research.
2. To consider the current and long-term financial position of, and funding arrangements for, the faculty/department, and its financial strategy.

Annex B Indicative framework for self-evaluation document

(Please note that faculties/departments are primarily asked to draw on their own sources of data in preparing the SED. The exception is a data set on the student profile. This is provided by Student Information Systems on a course by course basis, and is available in Tableau format centrally from an agreed census date of December 1st each year (See Annexe E: Joint review timing).

Evaluative matter in the text may be supported by basic information presented in annexes.

INTRODUCTION/SCOPE

Executive summary.

Definition/profile of the faculty/department which is under review.

A covering statement by the Chair of the faculty board/head of department which should be presented in the context of the divisional plan and the University's Strategic Plan, providing an overview of current issues, and a statement on key developments over the past five years, referring to recommendations made in the last Education Committee or Divisional review.

Sources of data used in the SED, including financial information, student numbers and student progression, and international benchmarks of excellence.

A contents page including numbered references to annexes, with data referred to in the text, as annexed information. Suggestions as to what this may be are italicised below.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE FACULTY/DEPARTMENT

(to be adapted to take account of the faculty/department's profile of provision by level and type of course)

- a) The quality of research in the faculty/department - including its research degrees and research training, participation in inter-faculty/department, inter-divisional and inter-disciplinary activities, its research profile and strategy, and future challenges and opportunities.

Information on which the evaluation should be based includes:

- Postgraduate research student profile - starters 2003-4 to 2009-10;
- Postgraduate research student progression and submission data, tabulating students by start date, and indicating the current situation on completions, and changes over last five years in the rate at which completion is being achieved;
- Research grant applications and successes;
- Data from Research Councils;
- Bibliometric data and quantity and sources of research grants, whether from internal or external sources and broken down by sub-faculty/department;
- Relevant data for the REF return;
- Research Student Experience questionnaire data;
- Development of post-graduate skills training.

- b) Quality of undergraduate and graduate programmes and their delivery and related issues – to include a discussion of:
- access and admissions;
 - curriculum design and programme structure;
 - teaching, learning (including learning development/study skills) and assessment;
 - the relationship between teaching and research;
 - academic and pastoral support and guidance;
 - the provision and use of learning resources (including staff resources, equipment and space*);
 - specific arrangements for the pursuit of graduate studies (including provision for part-time study);
 - relationships with colleges;
 - quality assurance mechanisms.

*On teaching and learning space, including where appropriate teaching laboratories and graduate study space, specific information should be provided, if necessary in a separate annex, with an assessment as to its fitness for purpose, any plans for its development and the practicability of making changes. (Arrangements should be made, as appropriate, for the committee to view the facilities on its meeting days.)

Information on which the evaluation should be based includes:

- Student number data;
 - Undergraduate profile;
 - Undergraduate application and admission data, including % of state/private schools, and % male/female;
 - Undergraduate progression and achievement data;
 - Class percentage data 2003 – 2012 examinations;
 - Postgraduate taught course profile and completion data;
 - National Student Survey/International Student Barometer results;
 - Minutes of meetings of student consultative bodies within the last couple of years;
 - Space employed for teaching and learning, broken down by types of usage;
 - Examiners' reports for the three preceding years and exam statistics;
 - The Quality Assurance Template returned most recently by the faculty/department;
 - Previous review reports, including any three year interim reports;
 - Student handbooks for all current graduate and undergraduate courses;
 - First degree destination statistics;
 - Comments from learned societies/accreditation bodies (where applicable);
 - Reports of accreditation bodies (if applicable) since the last Education Committee/Divisional Review;
 - Reports (if any) of Undergraduate or Postgraduate taught course reviews by the faculty/department or division, for example review of a PGT course after its first five years.
- c) Organisation of the faculty/department, its management structure and the relationship between the faculty/department/ and the Division - including such matters as:

- strategic planning (including relationship to divisional five-year plans and the University's Strategic Plan);
- academic and non-academic staff planning and recruitment;
- student number planning;
- terms of appointment for academic staff, including career development and equal opportunities issues;
- accommodation and future space needs;
- fundraising;
- administrative structures to support undergraduate and graduate studies, and examinations.

Information on which the evaluation should be based includes:

- Strategic plans of the faculty/department;
- Most recent planning document of faculty/department;
- Material provided for annual operating statements/divisional plans;
- Number of academic and support staff, and use of adjunct staff;
- Recent staff changes and anticipated future developments;
- Minutes of meetings for the last three years of the external advisory body.

- d) Relations (structural and operational) between units within the faculty/department (including where applicable sub-faculties/departments) and between the faculty/department and cognate areas and colleges to which it is linked in teaching and research. This may include:

- joint schools and partnerships with other faculties/departments;
- relations and sharing of responsibilities for provision and delivery with colleges;
- links with other Higher Education Institutions in the UK and outside;
- indication of any areas where cross-cutting reviews by the Education Committee might be of value.

Information on which the evaluation might be based includes:

- Formal and informal collaborations by or within the faculty/department (inter-disciplinary, national and international);
- Links with research councils or other national bodies;
- Entries in the Register of Collaborative Provision;
- Relations with colleges.

FINANCIAL AND FUNDING MATTERS

Major issues in income and expenditure planning, efficiency drives, the costing of planned activities and sources from which funds are expected, position in relation to JRAM, any other sources of income (including spin-out activities), other issues currently under review with Finance Department and with the Division.

- Information on which the evaluation should be based includes:
- Data from Annual Operating Statement;
- Data from Finance Division (although the Division would expect to be able to provide much of this);
- Information summary/updated information from the last RAE returns;
- Minutes of meetings for the last three years of any external advisory body;
- Capital planning and fund raising.

Annex C Sample content of review committee dossiers

Introductory material:

- Contents Page;
- Timetable for the review days;
- Terms of Reference for the review;
- Membership of the Committee and contact details;
- Short description of the process (for the use particularly of external members of the committee);
- Map of Oxford showing venues for the review days.

Self-Evaluation Document (SED) (including as an annexe the report of the last Divisional/Education Committee review).

Briefing by officers and/or Chair (to include a check-list of points to which the review may need to revert in its final session, ensuring that all matters addressed in the Terms of Reference and otherwise raised in advance of the review have been adequately discussed).

Submissions by third parties (including faculties/departments, colleges, university services and individuals).

Supplementary material (for example requested on specific points raised by the SED).

Annex D Joint reviews – sample brief outline for participants

Background

In 2006, the University's Council adopted a procedure for the periodic review of all faculties and departments jointly by the relevant division and the University's Education Committee.

Divisions (of which there are four - Humanities; Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences; Medical Sciences; and Social Sciences) consider issues across the board related to the faculties and departments for which they are responsible. Education Committee is responsible to Council for all matters relating to academic standards and the scope of the University's academic provision. The joint review procedure brings together the full range of issues – strategy and finance, as well as teaching and research – which, until it was adopted, had been addressed under separate review procedures.

Constitution

All faculties and departments are reviewed within a six year cycle. Standard terms of reference specified by Council are followed as appropriate for all joint reviews. Review Committees are normally chaired by the Chair of the Divisional Board, and have on them either the Chair of Education Committee or a member of the Education Committee who is nominated by the Chair.

Review Committees are required to include, in addition, at least two members, from other universities within the UK or outside. Members are also appointed by the Chair from another faculty or department in the same division, and also from the faculty/department concerned. A student representative (either the OUSU Vice-President for Access and Academic Affairs or the Vice-President for Graduates) is included on the review committee either for all parts of the review or for those sessions dealing with learning and teaching, at the discretion of the division concerned. In some cases a Senior Tutor from one of the colleges is also appointed. The views of the external members are given particular weight.

Procedure

The review is based on a statement provided by the faculty or department which is being reviewed referred to as the Self Evaluation Document (SED), with supporting factual information and data sets. The SED is written normally by the chair of the faculty board/head of department with input from colleagues. It will usually also identify issues the faculty or department would like the review to address.

A notice is put in the University Gazette inviting information to be provided on any matter within the terms of reference of the review. The review team also seeks input from specific sources within the University on any matter relevant to the review. Written information which is available to the review committee therefore consists of what the faculty or department supplies, and information available in the division, from colleges, the specialised services of the University and other third parties.

Two days are normally set aside for the review, which takes place on the premises of the faculty or department concerned. The committee has the opportunity to be briefed by the Chair of the Faculty Board/Head of Department and academic, administrative and finance staff, students and newly appointed academic staff, and to put its own questions to them. It

is usual for the Chair of the Review Committee to host a dinner on the evening of the first day so that panel members on their own can consider issues in an informal setting.

Follow-up

Once the review days have ended, a draft report is produced under 'Timetable for review reports' as soon as possible, on which members of the committee are all invited to provide comments. After the faculty/department has been given opportunity to comment on points of accuracy and the chair of the review committee has signed it off, the report is sent to the faculty/department and to the Divisional Board and Education Committee. Subsequently the faculty/department's comments on the report and its plans for implementation of the recommendations are provided for consideration by the Divisional Board. The report and the comments on it from faculty/department and division are then sent on to Education Committee, which may raise further issues, although usually of a more general nature. A synopsis of the conclusions of the report, though not the report itself, will then be made available.

Annex E Timing issues in joint reviews

At least TWO TERMS before the review is to take place it is suggested that the following key points be addressed:

- Identify officers to be involved;
- Establish jointly agreed plan, including dates and outline timetable based on consulting diaries for Chair and the Education Committee representative;
- Check availability of student representative (either the OUSU Vice-President for Access and Academic Affairs or the Vice-President for Graduates);
- Ask faculty/department to identify committee members, including potential external members;
- Submit names to divisional bodies and (through the division) to Chair of the Education Committee for agreement;
- Send out invitations once agreement is secured;
- Secure venues;
- Identify other reviews, enquiries, reports etc which may bear on the review.

ONE TERM before the review:

- Commission SED from the faculty/department;
- Supply detailed list of other information sought from faculty/department, and agree a detailed timetable with them;
- Identify issues and discuss as necessary with the chair:
 - On the scope of the review;
 - Issues the review will need to tackle;
 - On any separate overview briefing from the division;
 - Areas where there may be little to say, but where you may need to assemble information to satisfy the review committee that this is the case.
- Identify and solicit input from providers of written information, place advertisement in the Gazette, send letters etc.;
- Draft steering brief;
- Gather information and start to assemble the dossier.

SIX TO THREE WEEKS before the review date:

- Receive the SED;
- Finalise steering brief;
- Review contents of the dossier and chase up missing material;
- Invite those identified to give oral evidence on the day.

LAST THREE WEEKS before the review date:

- Send dossier to committee members, and chase any missing components;
- Brief Chair.

Annex F Contents of the data sets available centrally

From 2011 onwards, data provided annually by Student Data Management and Analysis on the student body by subject area has been available from 1st December. The data is provided in Tableau format so that it can be presented in formats which help to bring out key points and are helpful in managing and interrogating the information. In order to obtain the data you must be given access to the Annual Programme Statistics, either through WebLearn or on Tableau Server. Contact sdma@admin.ox.ac.uk to be given access.

Data is available under the following headings:-

Undergraduate

Number of students registered on undergraduate programmes within the faculty/department (including joint programmes) over the period 2003/4 to 2011/12, organised by attempt outcome and qualification outcome as follows:

- gender;
- ethnicity;
- disability;
- nationality;
- school type.

Attempt outcome is tabulated under registered (includes both starters & transferred in) and as: qualified, failed, withdrawn and incomplete (recorded both as numbers and as percentages of the total).

Qualification outcome is broken down by class, with each expressed as both numbers and percentages of the total.

Postgraduate Taught

Number of students registered on the PGT programmes within the faculty/department (including joint programmes) over the period 2005/6 to 2011/12 organised by attempt outcome and qualification outcome, as follows:

- gender;
- ethnicity;
- disability;
- nationality;
- student funding;
- previous qualification at Oxford/not.

Attempt outcome is tabulated under registered (includes both starters & transferred in) and as: continued to PGR study, qualified (only – i.e. left with a qualification), failed, withdrawn and incomplete (recorded both as numbers and as percentages of the total).

Qualification outcome is broken down by: distinction, pass and fail, with each expressed as both numbers and as percentages of the total.

Postgraduate Research

Number of students registered on the PGR programmes within the faculty/department over period 2003 to 2011 organised by attempt outcome as follows:

- gender;
- fee status;
- disability;
- ethnicity;
- previous qualification at Oxford/not.

Attempt outcome is tabulated under registered and outcome (qualified, lower award, submitted, withdrawn, transferred and incomplete, recorded both as numbers and as percentages of totals).

Number of students who transfer status by number of months since commencing programme of study for cohorts from 2003/4– 2011-12.

Number of students who confirm status by number of months since commencing programme of study for cohorts from 2003/4 – 2011-12.

Submission rates by number of months since commencing programme of study for cohorts from 2003/4 – 2011-12.

Annex G Briefing paper

Where a briefing paper is thought to be useful, its contents are likely to include all or some of the following:

- Provide signposts to the information provided, drawing attention in particular to relevant external sources of information, and including (where it is useful to do so) a summary of salient points which emerge;
- Identify positive aspects of the way the faculty/department conducts core activities, drawing for example on past reviews, on transactions between faculty/department and division, and on the information which has been gathered, while flagging up any areas which the committee might wish to investigate;
- Draw on the SED and the range of other information to identify areas where the committee may wish to challenge current aims and activities of the faculty/department, and the way operations are conducted;
- Draw attention to the way the SED or operational plans depict developments over the medium to longer term (five years or longer), and pose any questions arising about internal consistency and consonance with wider objectives;
- Give initial consideration to the process of following up the review committee's recommendations.