

The University of Sydney Academic Board

GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC BOARD REVIEW PHASE 2

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1. PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC BOARD REVIEW

1.1 The central purpose of Academic Board Review is to assist the University in safeguarding and enhancing the quality of its core activities i.e., teaching, learning and research. Review is intended:

- to support Faculties in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of their quality assurance arrangements, through peer review of processes, outcomes and the evidence that demonstrates their effectiveness;

- to assist Faculties in identifying and evaluating strengths and weaknesses;
- to support Faculties in maintaining a systematic and continuous cycle of planning, monitoring and improvement;
- to promote good practice throughout the University;
- to assist Faculties in evaluating achievements in relation to the University's Goals;
- to promote ownership of quality assurance activities throughout the University;
- to fulfil the University's requirements for both internal and external accountability (e.g. audit by the Australian Universities Quality Agency).

2. THE TWO PHASES OF ACADEMIC BOARD REVIEW

- 2.1 Reviews of Faculties commenced in late 2001 with the Academic Board Reviews of Faculty Teaching, Learning and Research Training. For ease of reference, these reviews are here referred to as the 'Phase 1' Reviews. All Faculties have now completed Phase 1 Review. This Phase 2 Review process is designed to complete the review process of Faculty activities in a manner complementary to the Phase 1 Review process. Whereas the Phase 1 process focused primarily on teaching, learning and research training, the Phase 2 process is designed to review the entirety of Faculty activity. Phase 2 will not duplicate Phase 1 Review. Teaching, Learning and Research Training will be addressed within the Phase 2 process by asking Faculties to provide an update on how they have responded to the Recommendations of the Phase 1 process. The rest of the Phase 2 Review process will consider the scope of Faculty activity with particular reference to the Faculty's contribution to the achievement of the University's seven Goals.
- 2.2 The Phase 2 Review process builds on the experiences of the Phase 1 reviews, taking account of feedback from Faculties on the process of Phase 1 review.
- 2.3 These Guidelines cover the Academic Board Review Phase 2 process. Separate guidelines exist for the Academic Board Reviews of Teaching, Learning and Research Training (Phase 1) process. It may be that, for the next round of Academic Board Reviews (not due to start until 2005), the Phase 1 and Phase 2 processes will be amalgamated into a single process. This matter will be considered in the light of experience of the Phase 2 Reviews.

3. CYCLE OF REVIEW

- 3.1 Each Faculty will normally undergo Academic Board Phase 2 Review every **five years**, although a shorter cycle is discretionary. The Chair of the Academic Board has responsibility for scheduling the Reviews. Phase 2 Reviews will commence in 2003 and all Faculties will have undergone Phase 2 Review by the end of 2004.

4. SCOPE OF REVIEW

- 4.1 The Phase 2 Faculty Reviews cover the full range of Faculty activities, with particular reference to their contribution to the University's seven Goals as described in its Strategic Plan 1999-2004. They cover the following:

Goal One	Quality Teaching and Learning
Goal Two	Diversity, Access and Equity
Goal Three	Excellence in Research
Goal Four	Internationalisation
Goal Five	Engagement with Industry and the Professions
Goal Six	Effective Management
Goal Seven	Service to the Community

- 4.2 Review evaluates both processes and outcomes:

- It evaluates the Faculty's internal quality assurance processes: the processes that the Faculty uses to assure itself of the quality of its academic activities in relation to teaching, learning, research and research training; and
- It evaluates the outcomes that reflect the success of the quality assurance processes.

The Academic Board's five-yearly Review process complements the Faculty's internal quality assurance processes. Academic Board Review processes seek to ensure the sustainability of the Faculty's own quality assurance processes and that they are robust and provide the necessary continuity in the cycle of planning, monitoring and improvement.

5. PRINCIPLES OF REVIEW

Review adheres to the University's Principles for Quality Assurance and Improvement, provided in Appendix 1.

6. STAGES OF REVIEW

More detailed summaries of the review process, indicating the responsibilities of position holders, are provided in Appendix 3 (overview) and Appendix 4 (Faculty responsibilities). The key stages can be summarised as follows:

- 6.1 ***Submission of the Self-evaluation Report*** Faculty submits Self-Evaluation Report (SER) to the Review Team four weeks in advance of the meeting date.
- 6.2 ***Review Meeting*** Review Team visits Faculty and meets with the Dean, Senior staff, other staff, and students. The duration of the meeting is likely to be a day or a day-and-a-half. The visit will conclude with the Chair providing an oral summary of the main findings of the Review Team to the Dean. (see Appendix 6)
- 6.3 ***Report of Review Meeting*** forwarded to Faculty, normally within four to six weeks of the visit.
- 6.4 ***Faculty submits response to Recommendations contained in the Review Meeting Report*** outlining how it will build the Recommendations into Faculty planning processes. (within two months of receiving the Report)
- 6.5 ***Faculty submits progress report*** on responding to the Recommendations. A meeting may be arranged between representatives of the Faculty and the Review Team, if appropriate. (within one year of receiving the Report)

7. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF REVIEW TEAMS

See Appendix 2.

8. SUMMARY OF DOCUMENTATION FOR REVIEW

- 8.1 The following documents should be provided:
 - Self-Evaluation Report (SER)
 - Overview of Quality Assurance arrangements (template provided)
 - Faculty Plans/Management Plans/Strategic Plans
 - Faculty Teaching and Learning Plans (updated since the last Review)
 - Faculty Research Plan
 - Any other relevant Faculty plans relating to matters such as research and scholarship, international reputation, diversity and equity, effective management, and links with the professions and the community

- 8.2 The key document in the Review process is the Self-Evaluation Report (SER). Please see separate *Guidelines on preparing Self-Evaluation Reports for Phase 2 Academic Board Review*. Please note that statistical information to support Faculties in preparing their SER will be provided to Faculties in advance of the Review (see Appendices 1 – 3 of SER guidelines).
- 8.3 Faculties are asked to produce a single, bound document containing all relevant material for the Review. This document should contain the SER plus all relevant appendices and attachments. The document should have a list of contents, section numbers throughout, page numbers throughout, and be cross-referenced as appropriate. As far as possible, documents should be in the program Microsoft Word. Please provide **six** (hard) copies to the Review Team Secretary **four weeks** in advance of the Review meeting. An electronic copy of the SER only should also be sent to the Review Team Secretary (but to supplement, not replace, the hard copies).

9. REPORT OF THE REVIEW MEETING

- 9.1 The Review Report shall be prepared by the Review Team Secretary in consultation with the Review Team Chair and shall be agreed with members of the Review Team before being forwarded to the Faculty (to the Dean and the Faculty Review Co-ordinator). The draft Review Report will normally be forwarded to the Faculty within **four to six weeks** of the Review meeting, with an invitation to comment upon points of factual accuracy. If the full report cannot be produced within four weeks, the Faculty shall receive a brief report within the four week deadline, in advance of receipt of the full report.
- 9.2 The Review Report shall normally include points of Commendation, Recommendations for Improvement and examples of good practice of relevance to other areas of the University. The Report shall normally be structured under headings in accordance with the Terms of Reference as outlined in s. 7 above. A template for the Report is provided in Appendix 5.
- 9.3 Once the Chair has considered comments from the Faculty on the Report and amended as deemed appropriate (in consultation with the full Review Team if there are significant or contentious comments) the report is forwarded by the Review Team Secretary for approval to the University Teaching and Learning Committee and subsequently to the University's Academic Board for ratification. Once ratified by the Academic Board the Report is posted on the Academic Board website, and at this point becomes accessible by students.

10. FACULTY RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Within **two months** of receiving the Review Report, the Faculty should submit an outline of how it will build the Recommendations into Faculty planning processes.

11. FACULTY UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 **One year** after receiving the Review Report, the Faculty provides the Review Team Chair with an update on the Faculty's progress in responding to the Review Team's Recommendations. Further updates may be agreed as necessary depending on the level of closure on the recommendations.

APPENDIX 1 UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY PRINCIPLES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

1. The aim of the University's quality assurance strategy is to enhance the effectiveness of its core activities of teaching and research.
2. The quality assurance strategy addresses all areas of University activity (academic, administrative and support services) and focuses on their contribution to the achievement of the University's Goals.
3. The University's quality assurance processes are driven by academic considerations. They are intrinsic to the work of staff who are undertaking or supporting teaching, the promotion of learning and research.
4. The University judges its achievements against appropriate national and international benchmarks. Comparison with other internationally competitive research universities is a key aspect of the University's commitment to improving its effectiveness.
5. Collegiality is an important aspect of quality assurance and the procedures used will reflect the principles of rigorous peer review. They will aim to identify areas where progress can be made, to foster collaboration and exchange of good practice, and to encourage an ethos of critical self-evaluation.
6. The University's quality assurance activities are part of normal and continuous cycle of planning, monitoring and improvement. Although the results from them will be useful for purposes of external review, they are not created with the prime purpose of meeting external requirements.
7. The University's quality assurance methods are evidence-based. Evidence of outcomes and feedback from stakeholders (including students, staff, employers and the community) will provide the basis for analyses and conclusions on which improvements are planned.
8. The University's quality assurance processes are designed to be streamlined, efficient and work within the principles of equity and natural justice.
9. The University's quality assurance activities will themselves be the subject of continuous review and improvement.

APPENDIX 2 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF REVIEW TEAMS

Membership:

A typical Review Teams will include the following members:

(Note: all members shall be from outside the Faculty undergoing Review)

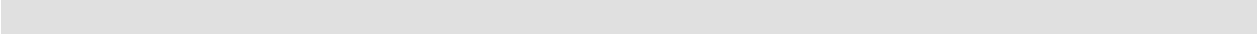
- Chair: Chair of the Academic Board or nominee;
- One member from a panel established by the Academic Board;
- The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) or nominee;
- The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee.

NB: No member of the pool of reviewers shall be on the review team for the Faculty of which he or she is a member. Other persons will disclose any potential conflict of interest in the faculties being reviewed.

Terms of Reference:

Phase 2 Review Teams will consider the scope of Faculty activity with particular reference to the Faculty's contribution to the achievement of the University's seven Goals. The Terms of Reference described below (which directly correlate with the Goals) will be considered in the light of:

- Faculty objectives and processes;
 - evidence of outcomes (and how these fit with targets and goals);
 - evidence of feedback from stakeholders (including students, staff, employers and the community);
 - the quality assurance processes by which the Faculty evaluates outcomes and feedback and plans improvement.
1. The Faculty's response to the Recommendations resulting from its Academic Board Review of Teaching, Learning and Research Training (Phase 1 Review);
 2. The Faculty's effectiveness in supporting diversity, access and equity for its students and staff in relation to, for example: gender balance; participation of indigenous Australians; successful participation of people from non-English speaking backgrounds, people with disabilities and people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds;
 3. The Faculty's research performance and the policies, processes and practices that promote and support excellence (in terms of internationally recognised standards);
 4. The success of the Faculty's strategies to enhance the University's position as a university of high standing in the international community of scholars, for example in relation to: links in research and consulting activities and staff and student exchange and collaboration; mechanisms to identify, encourage and reward contributions to international activities by students and staff; establishment of international benchmarks within disciplines.
 5. The effectiveness of the Faculty's engagement with industry and the professions in relation to, for example: arrangements for developing and maintaining professional links; relevance of curricula and graduate skills; provision of expectation and opportunity for ongoing graduate education; involvement of staff in professional associations, government agencies and professional regulatory bodies;
 6. The effectiveness of the Faculty's management structures and practices (for both human and physical resources) in relation to, for example: strategic planning that makes effective use of management information as part of goal-setting; strategies to promote equity, diversity, and environmental awareness in the staff and student environment.

7. The Faculty's contribution to the communities it serves locally, nationally and internationally in relation to, for example: contribution to local, national and international debate; provision of expert services; preparation of graduates for leadership roles.
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APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF REVIEW PROCESS

Action	Person in Faculty with responsibility	Person on Review Team with responsibility	Timescale
1 Identify dates of Review and advise Faculty		Review Team Secretary in consultation with Chair of Ac Board	ideally 12 months before the Review
2 Appoint Review Team Chair and members		Review Team Secretary in consultation with Chair of Ac Board	ideally 6 months before the Review
3 Prepare SER and supporting documentation	Faculty Review Co-ordinator		ideally to commence 6 months before the Review
4 Submit bound copies of SER and supporting documentation, and electronic copy of SER to the Review Team Secretary	Faculty Review Co-ordinator		4 weeks before the date of the Review meeting
5 Circulate copies of document to the Review Team		Review Team Secretary	3 weeks before the date of the Review meeting
6 Collate initial feedback from the Review Team on the documentation and circulate to Review Team		Review Team Secretary	10 days before the Review meeting
7 Faculty to advise Review Team Secretary of names of all students and staff attending the meeting and room location for meetings	Faculty Review Co-ordinator		10 days before Review meeting
8 Pre-Review Meeting of all members of the Review Team		Review Team Secretary	1 week before Review
9 Review Meeting	Faculty Manager or nominee to arrange rooms, catering and parking if necessary	Review Team Secretary liaise with Review Team and Faculty	Meeting date
10 Prepare and circulate initial draft report, first to Review Team Chair and then to other members of Review Team		Review Team Secretary draft and circulate. Review Team Chair and members read and provide feedback	ideally within 2 weeks of the Review date
11 Report to Faculty		Review Team Secretary	within 4-6 weeks of Review
12 Faculty comments on Report to Review Team Secretary	Dean/Faculty Review Co-ordinator		within 2 weeks of Faculty receiving Report
13 Report to University Teaching and Learning Committee		Review Team Secretary	within 2 months of Review
14 Faculty outline of how it will build Recommendations into Faculty planning	Dean/Faculty Review Co-ordinator		within 2 months of receiving Review report
15 Faculty update on response to Recommendations	Dean/Faculty Review Co-ordinator		within 1 year of receiving Review Report

APPENDIX 4 FACULTY CHECK-LIST FOR REVIEW PROCESS

Action	Person in Faculty with responsibility	Timescale
1. Dean to nominate senior member of staff from within the Faculty to act as the Faculty Review Co-ordinator (likely to be a senior member of staff such as the Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee or an Associate Dean)	Dean	ideally 6 months before the Review
2. Prepare SER and supporting documentation	Faculty Review Co-ordinator	ideally to commence 6 months before the Review
3. Submit electronic copies of SER and supporting documentation to the Review Team Secretary	Faculty Review Co-ordinator	4 weeks before the date of the Review meeting
4. Faculty to advise Review Team Secretary of names of all students and staff attending the meeting and room location for meetings	Faculty Review Co-ordinator	10 days before Review meeting
5. Review Meeting	Faculty Review Co-ordinator or nominee to arrange rooms, catering and parking, if necessary	Meeting date
6. Report received by Faculty (sent to the Dean, the Faculty Review Co-ordinator and the Faculty Manager/Executive Officer)		within 4-6 weeks of Review
7. Faculty comments on Report to Review Team Secretary	Dean and Faculty Review Co-ordinator	within 2 weeks of Faculty receiving Report
8. Faculty outline of how it will build Recommendations into Faculty planning	Dean and Faculty Review Co-ordinator	within 2 months of receiving Review report
9. Faculty update on response to Recommendations	Dean and Faculty Review Co-ordinator	within 1 year of receiving Review Report

APPENDIX 5 TEMPLATE FOR REVIEW REPORT

This template should be used as a rough guide only. It is not intended to be prescriptive. Different report structures may be more appropriate according to the discussions at the meetings.

Front page:	Name of Faculty Review date Table of contents
Introduction:	Review Team membership Faculty staff participating in discussions (only senior staff named) (??) Student groups participating in the discussions (no names) Documentation considered (cross reference to Appendix)
Background:	This section is optional. If included it would cover matters such as Faculty context, achievements, hallmarks, recent changes
Quality Assurance:	Summary of the Faculty's quality assurance structures and processes, identifying any perceived strengths and weaknesses
Quality Teaching and Learning:	Main findings cross-referenced to Conclusions
Diversity, Access and Equity:	Main findings cross-referenced to Conclusions
Excellence in Research:	Main findings cross-referenced to Conclusions
Internationalisation:	Main findings cross-referenced to Conclusions
Engagement with Industry and the Professions:	Main findings cross-referenced to Conclusions
Effective Management:	Main findings cross-referenced to Conclusions
Service to the Community:	Main findings cross-referenced to Conclusions
Conclusions:	Commendations – under relevant sub-heads and cross-referenced to Report Recommendations under relevant sub-heads and cross-referenced to Report
Appendices:	Program for the visit List of documentation considered by the Review Team Faculty's Self-Evaluation Report

The report should be an analytical account of the findings of the Review Team. It should be as brief as possible and not go into unnecessary detail. The Report should elucidate how the Conclusions have been arrived at. This might cover, for example, the issues investigated, the Faculty's objectives, how these relate to outcomes and feedback, how quality assurance mechanisms monitor the achievement of the objectives, and the Team's analysis and conclusions (which will identify strengths and weaknesses). The Report is not a record of meeting and is not intended to necessarily cover all matters discussed. Review Teams are not empowered to make recommendations for additional resources.

The Report will normally be drafted on behalf of the Review Team by the Review Team Secretary in consultation with the Review Team Chair. It will be circulated to the Review Team for agreement before being forwarded to the Faculty for comment on factual accuracy. Faculties will be provided with a format for comments eliciting: the precise reference within the report; an explanation of the point at issue; the reasoning or evidence to support the comment; and (if appropriate) a suggested re-wording.

APPENDIX 6 INDICATIVE TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW VISIT (ONE DAY VISITS)

Item	Content	Minutes	Time
	Private meeting of Review Team to finalise agenda	30	8.30 – 9.00
Interview One (a)	Dean	15	9.00 – 9.15
Interview One (b)	Dean and Senior Faculty Staff	75	9.15 – 10.30
	Morning Tea and discussion time for Review Team	15	10.30 – 10.45
Interview Two	Undergraduate students	50	10.45 – 11.35
Interview Three	Postgraduate coursework students	50	11.35 – 12.25
	Lunch and discussion time for Review Team	45	12.25 – 13.10
Interview Four	Postgraduate research students	50	13.10 – 14.00
	Review Team discussion time to determine agenda for Interview Five	20	14.00 – 14.20
Interview Five	Other academic and general staff (including key research staff if not included in Interview One)	60	14.20 – 15.20
Interview Six	Open interview – staff and students can book time within this slot to raise issues of concern with the Review Team	20	15.20 – 15.40
	Review Team discussion time and afternoon tea	20	15.40 – 16.00
Interview Seven	Dean and Senior staff (meeting to follow-up any issues that have arisen during the day)	20	16.00 – 16.20
	Review Team discussion time to finalise Conclusions	30	16.20 – 16.50
Report back	Dean	15	16.50 – 17.05

Note: If there are no requests from the Faculty for individuals to meet with the Review Team (Interview Six), then Interview Seven may be moved forward by 20 minutes to 15.40.

APPENDIX 7 INDICATIVE TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW VISIT (ONE AND A HALF DAY VISITS)

Item	Content	Minutes	Time
<u>DAY ONE</u>			
Private meeting of Review Team to finalise agenda		30	8.30 – 9.00
Interview One (a)	Dean	30	9.00 – 9.30
Interview One (b)	Dean and Senior Faculty Staff (morning tea at 10.30)	105	9.30 – 11.15
Discussion time for Review Team		20	11.15 – 11.35
Interview Two	Undergraduate students	50	11.35 – 12.25
Lunch and discussion time for Review Team		45	12.25 – 13.10
Interview Three	Postgraduate coursework students	50	13.10 – 14.00
Interview Four	Postgraduate research students	50	14.00 – 14.50
Interview Five	Open interview – staff and students can book time within this slot to raise issues of concern with the Review Team	30	14.50 – 15.10
Review Team discussion time to determine agenda for Interviews Six and Seven (over afternoon tea)		60	15.10 – 16.10

<u>DAY TWO</u>			
Coffee for the Review Team		15	8.45 – 9.00
Interview Six	Other academic and general staff (including key research staff if not included in Interview One)	90	9.00 - 10.30
Review Team discussion time over morning tea		30	10.30 – 11.00
Interview Seven	Dean and Senior staff (meeting to follow-up any issues that have arisen during meetings)	60	11.00 – 12.00
Review Team discussion time to finalise Conclusions		30	12.00 – 12.30
Report back	Dean	15	12.30 - 12.45

APPENDIX 8 NOTE FOR STUDENTS BEING INVITED TO MEET WITH REVIEW TEAMS

The following note should be provided to all students that are attending interviews with the Academic Board Review Team during the visit.

Thank you for agreeing to meet with the Academic Board Review Team that will be visiting the Faculty of on You, along with other **undergraduate/postgraduate/research** students will meet with the Review Team from

00.00am/pm to 00.00am/pm, day, date, in Room

Purpose of the Review process

All Faculties experience Review periodically as a standard part of the University's quality assurance activities. An important aim is to help Faculties provide the best possible experiences for their students. Review is a collegial process carried out under the auspices of the University's Academic Board and designed to provide useful and constructive feedback to Faculties.

Purpose of the meetings with students within the Review

The purpose of the meetings with students is for the Review Team to gather, first hand, student views on their experience in the Faculty.

Confidentiality

Anything you say to the Review Team will be treated in confidence. Feedback from students is often built in to the content of the written Report of the Review, but it is not attributed in any way to individuals.

The types of issues the Review Team might be interested in discussing with you

- Issues arising from the Academic Board's recent review (in 2001 or 2002) of the Faculty's teaching, learning and research training. In addition to matters pertaining specifically to teaching, learning and research training, these might also relate to matters such as how well the Faculty's mechanisms for collecting student feedback are working (eg student participation in Faculty committees, the staff/student consultative committee, end of unit evaluation questionnaires), and, how the Faculty responds to student feedback (eg whether you are explicitly advised of resulting changes).
- Student support mechanisms – how well supported you feel by the Faculty – what arrangements there are to identify and support students in difficulty, or with particular language or study skills needs.
- Diversity, Access and Equity – whether you feel part of a diverse student group (eg diverse in relation to indigenous Australians, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, people with disabilities, people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and gender balance), and whether you are aware of any Faculty strategies to promote and support diversity.
- Research – to what extent you feel that you benefit from being part of a vibrant research culture.
- Internationalisation – your perceptions of the Faculty's strategy in relation to internationalisation. This might relate to, for example, components in the curriculum with an international focus, an international dimension in assignments, opportunities for student exchange or study abroad,

opportunities to study foreign languages, exposure to international research, international student numbers in the Faculty.

- Engagement with Industry and the Professions – what are your perceptions of the ways that the Faculty engages with the relevant industry/professions? This might relate to, for example, opportunities for professional placements, the relevance of the skills and knowledge you develop during your course to the relevant profession/industry, the extent to which your educational experience exposes you to the latest developments in professional practice (for example through visiting lecturers, guest speakers, assignments/research related to the workplace).
- Community Service – what are your perceptions of the Faculty’s strategies to service its various communities (eg the population of Sydney, employers of its graduates, local schools)? This might include, for example, community based research projects, outreach activities to Sydney high schools, contributions by staff and students to local, national and international debate, activities that might benefit or enrich communities (eg exhibitions, public lectures, services to the public).