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

Education Committee

Valid from Trinity Term 2015

Full implementation from Michaelmas Term 2015*

*Proposals already in the approval process will be cross-referenced against the policy by officers during scrutiny, all proposals will be subject to the requirement to seek external review from Michaelmas Term 2015.

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Version history

March 2015	Original publication	Approved by Quality Assurance Subcommittee
September 2015	Minor updates	Education Policy Support

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[1] 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.

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 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

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[1] 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.*

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 graduate taught courses.* Departments and faculties should bring forward proposals for this type of change through the division to Education Committee 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 graduate 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.

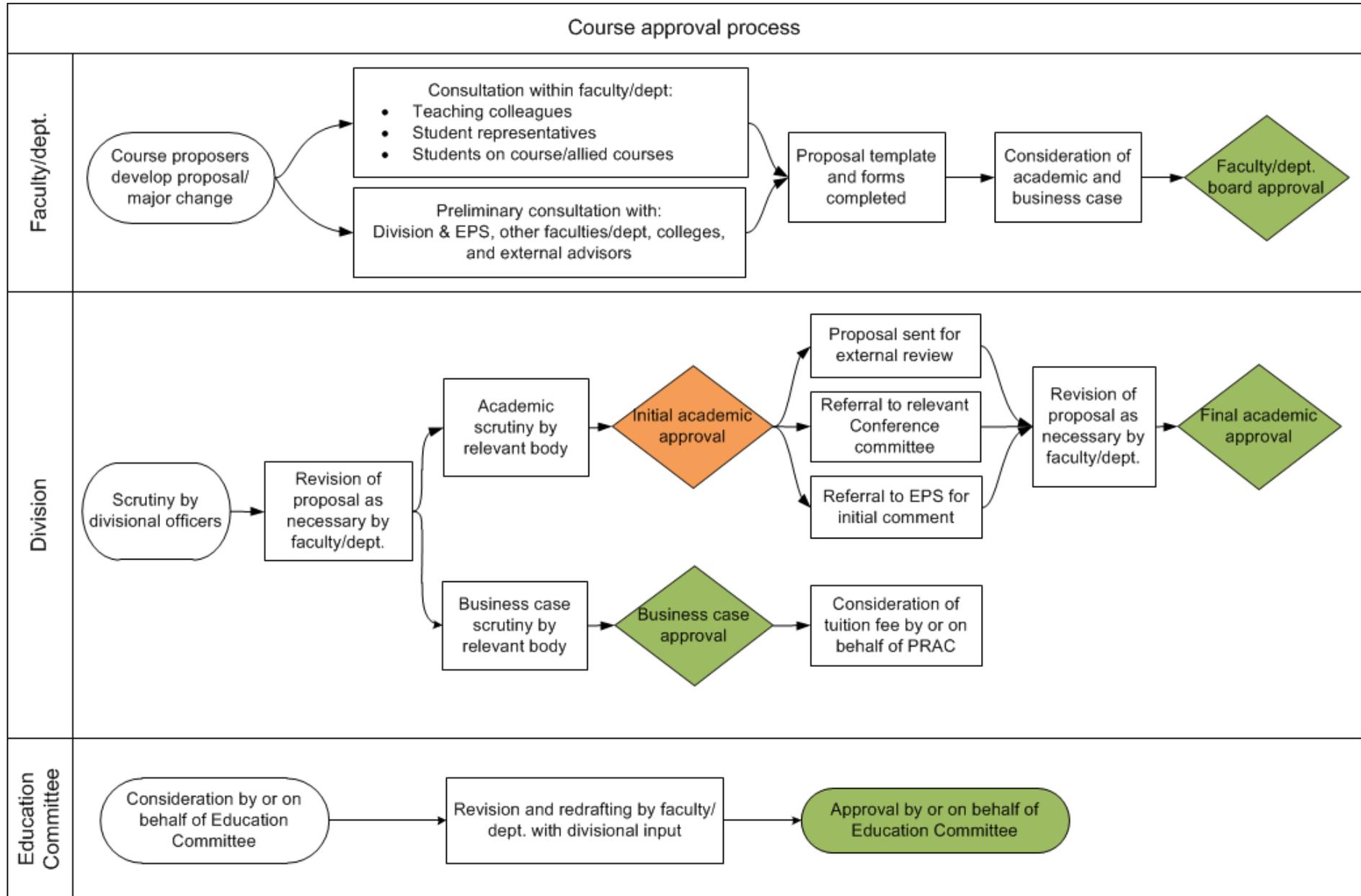## 7. Process for the development and approval of new courses and major changes

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.

7.2. **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. **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. **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 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 by the end of Hilary Term in the academic year prior to when they will be advertised for entry i.e. Hilary 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 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).

Course approval process

Faculty/dept.

Course proposers develop proposal/ major change

Consultation within faculty/dept:
- Teaching colleagues
- Student representatives
- Students on course/allied courses

Preliminary consultation with:
Division & EPS, other faculties/dept, colleges, and external advisors

Proposal template and forms completed

Consideration of academic and business case

Faculty/dept. board approval

Division

Scrutiny by divisional officers

Revision of proposal as necessary by faculty/dept.

Academic scrutiny by relevant body

Initial academic approval

Proposal sent for external review

Referral to relevant Conference committee

Referral to EPS for initial comment

Revision of proposal as necessary by faculty/dept.

Final academic approval

Business case scrutiny by relevant body

Business case approval

Consideration of tuition fee by or on behalf of PRAC

Education Committee

Consideration by or on behalf of Education Committee

Revision and redrafting by faculty/ dept. with divisional input

Approval by or on behalf of Education Committee

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. 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 or equality services;

- colleges, to identify those willing to offer places to students[2] 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.

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.

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.

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[2] This is different to the consultation with the relevant Conference of Colleges committee on the course proposal itself as described in section 7.4.2.

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 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.

Education Committee scrutiny stage

7.32. 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).

7.33. 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.

7.34. 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.

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.

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 2016-17.

Annexes

Annex A: Proposal for a new course/major change to an existing course

Annex B: Plagiarism and assessment design

Annex C: Suggested questions for divisional bodies undertaking course scrutiny

Annex D: Conference Graduate Committee cover sheet

Annex E: Nomination for external review form

Annex F: Guidance for external reviewers

Annex G: Justification for proposed University fee form

Annex H: Checklist for drafting changes in regulations

Annex I: Guidance on the management of vested interests

Annex J: Proposal for a limited entry part-time DPhil

Annex K: Implementing a new course or major change

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 to 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, 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 graduate 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 [in development]*, 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 courses use this section to describe the particular focus and approach of the course.

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

All UG and 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 undergraduate courses, proposers should ensure they are familiar with the requirements of the sections 'Tutorials and Tutorial teaching' and 'Lectures and classes' in the *Policy and Guidance on undergraduate learning and teaching.*

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 postgraduate research 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 undergraduate courses, proposers should ensure that they are familiar with the requirements of the section on 'Examinations and assessment' in the *Policy and Guidance on undergraduate learning and teaching*.

For all taught courses, proposers should ensure that they are familiar with the requirements of section 2 (the 'University framework for examinations and assessment) and Annex D ('Good practice guide to assessment design') in the *Policy and Guidance for Examiners*.

For postgraduate research 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 undergraduate 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 postgraduate taught 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, it is the University's expectation that provision will be made for such candidates to take the course under the regulations that originally applied to them, for a reasonable period of time (subject to the regulations relating to being overstanding for honours).

Under regulations introduced in 2006, a student who is admitted to take a part of a Final Honour School or the relevant Part within six terms of the term in which they were originally due to be examined (category A) shall normally be examined in accordance with the regulations pertaining to the original examination.

A student who is admitted to be examined for a part of a Final Honour School or the relevant Part seven or more terms after the term in which they were originally due to be examined (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 in the two preceding paragraphs, a detailed description should be provided.

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

For undergraduate 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 postgraduate courses, the course proposal should indicate the arrangements in place for skills training for postgraduate 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), Supplement (1), Gazette no. 4633, 9 October 2002, p. 97)[1]

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 postgraduate courses);

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[1] The following regulation has been made:

Fees payable by candidates for fieldwork

1. In the following programmes of study, additional charges will be made for fieldwork that is a requirement of the programme:

   BA Archaeology;
   BA Biological Sciences;
   BA Classical Archaeology & Ancient History;
   BA Geography;
   BA Geology (pre-2012 entrants only);
   MEarthSci (pre-2012 entrants only);
   MPhil Latin American Studies; and
   MSc Water Science, Policy and Management.

2. Other programmes of study may carry additional charges for optional fieldwork, projects or placements that are not a requirement of the programme.'

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 undergraduate 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 undergraduate 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.

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), 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.

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)

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

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[1] and the Qualifications Descriptors in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications[2] 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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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
[2] 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

Outline information			
Department or Faculty			
Course title			
Proposed start date			
Duration of course (in months)			**FT / PT**
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.			

Student numbers				
	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?			**Additional /substitute**	
If additional, are they already included in the Divisional Five Year Plan?			**Yes / No**	
What proportion of students will be home / EU?				

Application information	
Entry requirements	
Application deadline	
Anticipated university fee	
What scholarships or sources of financial support are available to students taking this course?	

Course delivery
Describe the implications for college facilities and teaching resources. Please indicate if these are required or desirable.

Which Department/Faculty members might teach on the course?	2
Which broad subject areas would be appropriate for those taking on the role of college advisors?	

Please include any other information concerning the proposed degree which might be of relevance to colleges here.

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 7.4.2 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[1] 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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[1] Adapted for sense from http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgexaminers/annexej/

- 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

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[1]. 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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[1] 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[2] 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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[2] 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 G

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROPOSED UNIVERSITY FEE FOR 2016/17

NOTES OF GUIDANCE AS AT DECEMBER 2014

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, in the light of the information in this form, which must be submitted as follows:

- for new programmes, to the Education Committee 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 PRAC by week 7 of Hilary Term of the year before that to which the changes apply (i.e. by early March 2015 in respect of fees for 2016-17).

PLEASE COMPLETE

PART A

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

Undergraduate

Please select one option from each of the tables below:

Home/EU (Standard) – the fee will be:	As set by government
Home/EU YA (Year Abroad) - if applicable the fee will be:	5% of HEU non-year-abroad fee
Overseas YA (Year Abroad) - if applicable the fee will be:	Half relevant Overseas non-year-abroad fee

Islands (UG and PGCE)	
Bands D-B	approx £9,000 (as set by government)
Band A	approx £25,905

Overseas	
UG4 (most classroom based courses)	£15,295
UG5 (some laboratory based courses)	£17,555
UG5b (MPLS laboratory based courses)	£22,515
UG6 (clinical medical students)	£31,005

Postgraduate

Please select one Home/EU (standard fee) and one Overseas fee from the table below, avoiding the grey shaded bands

	Full-time	Part-time	H/EU	OS
PG1 (Standard Home/EU PGR)	c. £4,225	c. £2,115		
PG2	£5,910	£2,955		
PG3	£6,550	£3,275		
PG4	£7,185	£3,595		
PG5	£8,460	£4,230		
PG5a	£9,930	£4,965		
PG6	£11,940	£5,970		
PG7	£13,150	£6,575		
PG7a	£14,365	£7,185		
PG8	£15,295	£7,650		
PG8a	£15,705	£7,855		
PG9	£16,280	£8,140		
PG10	£17,555	£8,780		
PG10a	£17,960	£8,980		
PG11	£18,770	£9,385		
PG12	£21,500	£10,750		
PG13	£26,370	£13,185		
PG14	£28,015	£14,010		
PG14a	£29,110	£14,555		
PG15	£31,005	£15,505		
PG16	£32,960	£16,480		
PG17	£32,435	£16,220		
PG17a	£34,760	£17,380		
PG18	£36,145	£18,075		
PG19	£46,120	£23,060		
PG20	£66,575	£33,290		

Is this a part-time course?   Yes/No

Is this a whole course fee?[1]   Yes/No

[1] A 'whole course fee' is the fee that applies to the entire programme of study, regardless of number of years, and is therefore different from an annual tuition fee.

PART B

Additional course costs
Do any additional course-related costs fall on students (over and above University fees and any college fees)?
YES/NO
If yes, please provide a concise 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).

Benchmarking
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

Departmental business case
New programmes only: please attach projections of income and expenditure on the course, and explain the basis on which the fee had 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 *Existing programmes*: 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?)

Bursaries
(In respect of a proposal for a home/EU fee for a postgraduate programme above band PG1) Has provision been made for bursaries for research council students?[2] If no, please explain reasons
YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE
(In respect of all 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
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

[2] RCUK sets an indicative fee (£3,900 in 2013-14): 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.

Admissions

In respect of existing courses: 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

For both new and existing courses: 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

Annex H: Checklist for drafting changes in regulations

(a)   Publish proposed changes in good time

Changes in regulations should be published in good time to ensure that students on course with vested interests are not adversely affected.

        Changes do not take final effect until 15 days have passed from the date of publication in the *University Gazette* – this allows members of Congregation time to object to a proposed change in legislation.

(b)   The draft explanatory note

The explanatory note at the end of changes in regulations should concisely explain the purpose lying behind the proposal. Ensure that the draft changes in regulations give effect to the description in the explanatory note.

(c)   EXAMINATION Regulations

The *Examination Regulations* concern examinations and not teaching arrangements (which find their proper place in course handbooks). The *Examination Regulations* typically refer to 'candidates' and not 'students', and they cover what can be expected in the examination, the topics that will be examined, and the deadlines for applications relating to the examination, and for submission of examined written work.

(d)   How to draft/check a proposed change in regulations (whether major or minor)

When drafting/checking a proposed change in regulations (whether a major one or otherwise):

- ensure that the precise name of the degree course is accurate – refer to the published *Examination Regulations* [N.B. do not include 'Final' in the name of an Honour School, and note that the title is '**Honour** School' and not 'Honours School';

- give the correct heading above the change [i.e. name all responsible bodies] [N.B. this heading will be published in the *University Gazette*];

- ensure that the desired new examination date does not adversely affect vested interests of candidates currently on course;

- ensure that the technical 'effective date' (always 1 October – notional start of the academic year) is just one year before the intended new examination date, otherwise the examination regulations for the current course will be lost from the *Examination Regulations* too soon [NB. this 'effective date' bears no relationship to the date from which the new/changed paper/option is actually taught to students];

- give correct page and line numbers;

- list proposed changes in regulations in the order they appear in the *Examination Regulations*, i.e. page 56 changes before page 57 changes, and line 2 changes before line 41 changes;

- use the "delete … and substitute …" standard formulation, rather than something like "omit/remove … and replace with …";

- avoid footnotes wherever possible [footnotes make text harder to read, and in particular do not display well on-line];

- quote words due for deletion, if they are not the only the text on a particular line [NB. conversely, if the proposal is to delete **all** the text on a particular line, there is no need to quote any of that text in the change in regulations];

- ensure that each proposed change relates only to the degree course named in the heading of the paper [i.e. if there is a change in a parent school followed by a change in a joint school, a fresh heading and date of effect must be shown for the joint school change];

- in the case of joint schools affected by a change to a parent school, where the joint school published regulations refer back to the parent school published regulations, make reference at the foot of the parent school regulations changes to the other affected schools, in a standard format [e.g. Honour School of Modern Languages + joint schools] [bear in mind the possible need for a different (later) effective date if a joint course is longer than the parent school (e.g. because of year abroad)];

- consider/make all necessary consequential changes within the course's own regulations and/or elsewhere [e.g. in formal lists of degree courses, in the fees appendix, in regulations for relevant joint/shared courses];

- ensure that the change will make sense to a reader of the *University Gazette* [i.e. enough, but not too much, text is deleted/substituted];

- ensure that the change will look reasonable when eventually published in the printed grey book or online - avoid punctuating a paragraph/section with too many **[Until …]s** and **[From …]s** and if in doubt, replace a whole section of text rather than littering it with tiny changes that render the whole unreadable;

- if a candidate will require additional information in the future [e.g. list of optional papers, instructions on format of extended essay], ensure that the regulation makes clear when/where that information will be published.

- above all, ensure that the format and content is crystal clear.

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. This consultation is particularly important for Type 2 changes. Only in the case of expedited changes is consultation of individual students required.

3. All changes to Examination Regulations should follow the guidance note and template provided on the Examination Regulations website.[1]

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

4. 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.

5. 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');
   - 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

6. 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

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[1] http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/regsguide.shtml

first term of their course of study for the examination concerned.[2] These changes should be approved through the normal mechanisms in divisions (and except for expedited changes do not require approval from Education Committee).

7. 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).

8. 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 3rd year with a BA but no new progression hurdle is required for continuation to 4th year.

9. 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

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

11. 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.

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[2] Other than for students whose normal course of study for the examination has been extended on account of illness or other cause.

Type 3: Fundamental changes

12. 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.

13. These changes would be considered internally through the major change process of the *Policy and Guidance on new courses and major changes*.

14. 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 3rd year to 4th year.

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.

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.

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)
- 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 GAF 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

Annex L

Guidance on writing programme aims and intended learning outcomes

Oxford Learning Institute, University of Oxford

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.[1]

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:

- [1] 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.[1] 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

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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.

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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.

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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)