

PERIODIC DEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS OF UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS GUIDANCE FOR STAFF IN DEPARTMENTS BEING REVIEWED

1 Introduction

- 1.1 All Departments of the University (academic and professional service) undergo a Periodic Departmental Review once every six years. Periodic Departmental Review Panels operate as a critical friend, and a supportive but rigorous approach to the exercise is adopted.
- 1.2 The primary aims of the process are to assess the general health of departmental work in the context of its aims and the University's Strategic Plan, to identify and share good practice, and to make recommendations for further development.

2 The Periodic Departmental Review Process

- 2.1 A Periodic Departmental Review Panel includes the following members:
 - the Chair (a member of the University's Senior Management Team [SMT] who does not have responsibility for the area under review);
 - the member of the SMT who oversees the work of the department under review;
 - a Head of Department from outside the faculty or service area housing the department under review;
 - two external experts;
 - a student panellist, wherever possible;
 - a representative of the Quality and Standards Office acting as Secretary to the Panel (who drafts the final report).
- 2.3 Approximately six weeks prior to Periodic Departmental Reviews, departments under review submit a self-assessment document called a Departmental Evaluative Profile (DEP). This document is used to guide lines of enquiry. Panel members also receive supporting evidence supplementary to the DEP.
- 2.4 Approximately one to two weeks after receipt of the DEP, internal Panel members meet to agree a maximum of five lines of enquiry to pursue during the review event.

3 The Review Event

- 3.1 Appendix A shows a template schedule for a two-day event.
- 3.2 The opening meeting of the review allows the Panel to discuss issues arising from further reading of DEPs and supporting evidence. These meetings are also used to prioritise the main themes and to assign any specific lines of questioning to particular Panel members.
- 3.3 On the first morning of the review the Panel will meet with the HoD who will provide a short presentation about the department. The Panel then has the opportunity to clarify any points with the HoD and explore the lines of enquiry.

- 3.4 During review events, Panels meet with various groups of stakeholders including:
- students / customers (direct recipients of provision or services);
 - University staff from inside and outside the department under review;
 - external stakeholders with a vested interest in the work of the department, for example, collaborative partners, employers and researchers from the public and private sectors.
- 3.5 The Panel will use these meetings to further explore the lines of enquiry with a range of groups. The meetings are conducted formally with members of the Panel asking questions to those invited (usually groups of 8-10 people) to gain a fuller picture of how the department operates. Meetings usually last for between 30 and 60 minutes.
- 3.6 Questions to be asked by Panels are decided at the initial Panel meeting on day one, so it is not possible to provide a list of questions to participants in advance of the event. However, the majority of questions will be based around the lines of enquiry. The lines of enquiry are circulated to participants shortly before the event to provide an indication of the main areas to be explored.
- 3.7 During meetings with Review Panels, it is helpful for stakeholders to provide brief descriptions of their role in the department.

4 Post-Review Activity

- 4.1 At the end of reviews, Panels produce a report, which is used by departments and by the University to inform both operational and strategic management activity.
- 4.2 The Chair of the Panel oversees the production of Periodic Departmental Review Reports. The full Report will not contain any additional recommendations to the oral feedback provided at the end of the review event. The first draft of the Report is prepared by a representative of the Quality and Standards Office. The draft is circulated for comment to the Review Chair and to Panel members. The report is amended in the light of any comments from Panel members and the revised draft is approved by the Chair, before it is sent to the Head of Department for an opportunity to comment on any factual inaccuracies or omissions. Changes to the Periodic Departmental Review Panel's agreed judgments occur in exceptional circumstances only, and are subject to the agreement of the whole Panel.
- 4.3 The Report will include a series of commendations and recommendations to the department. Departments are asked to provide commentary summarising how they have responded to the recommendations of the Review both 6 months and 1 year after the event.

5 Contact Information

- 5.1 Support for the Periodic Departmental Review process is provided by the Quality and Standards Office. Contact information is as follows:
- Kate Barry
 - Telephone: 01227 782257
 - E-mail: kate.barry@canterbury.ac.uk
 - The web pages for the Quality and Standards Office can be accessed from:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/quality-and-standards-office/periodic-departmental-review/periodic-departmental-review.aspx>

EXAMPLE PERIODIC DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW SCHEDULE FOR REVIEW EVENTS (TWO DAYS)

DAY ONE

0915-0930	Introductions over coffee
0930-1100	Opening Meeting between Panel Members
1100-1200	Meeting with Head of Department
1200-1245	Tour of Facilities (Departments, Library, Open Access, service areas, as appropriate)
1245-1330	Lunch
1330-1430	Meeting with Key Departmental Staff
1445-1530	Meeting with Departmental Staff
1530-1545	Break
1545-1630	Meeting with Departmental Professional Service Staff
1645-1745	Meeting with Students/Users of Service
1800-2000	Panel Discussion over dinner

DAY TWO

0845-0915	Panel discussion over coffee
0915-1015	Meeting with Stakeholders
1030-1115	Meeting with Stakeholders
1115-1130	Break
1130-1215	Meeting with Stakeholders
1215-1330	Panel discussion over Lunch
1330-1400	Emerging issues with Head of Department (if needed)
1400-1500	Panel discussion for Formulation of Feedback
1530-1600	Feedback session to Department