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

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

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

***Guiding principles***

1. The new framework is governed by three key principles:

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

***Main elements***

1. The new framework has three main elements:

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

1. ***Divisional gathered field exercise***

*Conduct of gathered field exercise*

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

*Scope of gathered field exercise*

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

*Consideration of proposals for new cross-divisional courses*

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

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

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

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

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

*Exemptions from the gathered field exercise*

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

*Institutional criteria for new courses*

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

*Review of institutional criteria*

1. Institutional criteria will be reviewed regularly by a panel of Education Committee in the light of changing internal and external circumstances and institutional strategic priorities.
2. ***Central review and endorsement***

*Purpose of the central review*

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

*Composition of Education Committee panel*

1. In place of the VC’s Forum in the pilot exercise conducted in 2016-17, the central review and endorsement will be conducted by a panel of Education Committee, chaired by the PVC Education and comprising representatives of the divisions and the Conference of Colleges.

*Detailed planning and approval of new courses*

1. Proposals that have been prioritised through the gathered field exercise and endorsed in the central review may then proceed to detailed planning and approval in accordance with standard quality assurance processes[[1]](#footnote-1).
2. ***Headroom for modest growth***

*Purpose and scope of the headroom*

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

*Exclusions from the headroom*

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

*Calculation of additional student numbers for purpose of the headroom*

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

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

**Introduction**

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

**Key dates for coming round**

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

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

**Template**

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

**Finding student numbers through redistribution**

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

**Conduct of the gathered field**

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

**Written record**

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

**Applications by the Department for Continuing Education**

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Results of the central review will be notified to divisions in early December. Following notification of the results, divisions will be expected to:

* Notify relevant departments/faculties of the results;
* Include in their returns to the annual student number planning round details of any additional student intake places recommended by the Education Committee panel; and
* Work with relevant departments/faculties to ensure the proper development, scrutiny and approval of new course proposals endorsed by the Education Committee panel[[2]](#footnote-2), in accordance with established quality assurance processes[[3]](#footnote-3).

**Future rounds**

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

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

**PREAMBLE**

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

**Scope of the process**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Included** | **Not included** |
| All proposals for new matriculated courses, regardless of level of study (UG, PGT, PGR) and mode of study (full-time or part-time)  Proposals for part-time variants of existing full-time courses only if they involve a request for additional student intake places. | Proposals for major changes to existing courses  Proposals for new non-matriculated courses[[5]](#footnote-5)  Proposals for part-time variants of existing full-time courses if they do not involve a request for additional student intake places. |

**Length of proposal**

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

1. **COURSE SUMMARY**

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

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

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

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

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

1. **INNOVATION CRITERION**

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

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

1. **MARKET DEMAND**

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

1. **STAFFING**

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

* Name, position, college and/or departmental affiliation of the lead academic for the proposal (i.e. course director)
* Number and proportion of academic staff teaching on the course on permanent or long-term (>3 year) contracts
* Details of any new academic appointments associated with the proposal
* Workload implications of the proposal for academic staff (in departments/faculties and colleges) involved in teaching and academic support, and how these will be managed
* Workload implications of the proposal for non - academic staff (in departments/faculties, colleges and University central services) involved in student support services, and how these will be managed

1. **SPACE AND EQUIPMENT**

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

1. **STUDENT FUNDING**

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

1. **PLANNED STUDENT NUMBERS**

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

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

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

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Planned intake numbers |  |
| How will the planned numbers be sourced? |  |

1. **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND CONSENT OBTAINED**

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

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

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

1. **DEPARTMENTAL / FACULTY RANKING**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Departmental / faculty ranking (as applicable) |  |

**Section 4: Note on the relationship between the annual SNP round and the new courses planning framework**

**Introduction**

1. This note outlines how the new framework for the planning and development of new courses will align with the annual student number planning round overseen by Joint Student Number Planning Subcommittee (JSNPSC)[[6]](#footnote-6).

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

1. The new process has two main steps:

* Step 1: a gathered field exercise run by each division to consider all proposals for new courses[[7]](#footnote-7) emanating from the division, or in collaboration with the division i.e. with another division and/or the Department for Continuing Education. The outcomes of these divisional exercises will then be reported to a panel of Education Committee, chaired by the PVC Education;
* Step 2: the central review and endorsement of divisional priorities for new courses, emerging from the divisional gathered field exercises, by the panel of Education Committee.

1. The process will have two main outcomes:

* A set of endorsed priorities for new courses for development, scrutiny and approval by Education Committee in accordance with standard quality assurance processes[[8]](#footnote-8); and
* A recommended number of additional student intake places, both full-time and part-time, associated with the endorsed priorities for new courses, for the relevant year of start of the new course.

**Alignment with annual student number planning round**

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

* additional student intake numbers recommended by the panel of Education Committee in relation to endorsed priorities for new courses; and
* additional student intake numbers (whether for the introduction of new courses or for the expansion of existing courses) accepted by JSNPSC for exceptional cases where the new places are fully funded as part of government initiatives e.g. PGR doctoral training places made available through RCUK or similar external doctoral training schemes, or revisions to government sponsored training schemes, such as PGCE and UG medicine courses.

1. As at present, Divisions will be free to make adjustments in student places between existing courses within the agreed planning totals. Thus, any expansion of an existing course will need to be met through offsetting reductions in other courses.
2. The new courses process to be managed by the panel of Education Committee will complement, not replace, the student number planning process overseen by JSNPSC. Because the panel of Education Committee will deal only with proposals for new courses, i.e. not proposals for expansion and/or contraction of existing courses, and because divisions and colleges draw up their plans separately, it will still be necessary for JSNPSC to collate and analyse college and divisional plans to ensure that any mismatch in volume and pattern of numbers is addressed and reconciled.
3. The revised student number planning timetable, with the new complementary steps for new courses added, is shown at Section 6 for illustration. The timing of steps will be reviewed in the light of experience of the operation of the new courses process.

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

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

2017

June *Gathered field guidance note and template issued to divisions*

*Divisions call for bids by end September*

October *Divisions conduct gathered field exercises*

November *Education Committee panel considers outcomes of divisional gathered field exercises. Endorses priorities for new courses for full development & QA scrutiny. Recommends any ‘headroom for modest growth’ figure for 2019-20 SNP round*

2018

January *JSNPSC receives details of any recommended headroom for growth figure for 2019-20*

*JSNPSC receives details of any exceptional cases for growth, proposed or accepted since the previous year’s Letter to Divisions*

February JSNPSC agrees annual Letter to Divisions *(incorporating details of any agreed headroom for growth for 2019-20, and any exceptional cases for growth accepted*)

Letter sent to Divisions requesting student number plans (for 2018-19 and 2019-20)

Late March Deadline for divisional SNP returns

Mid April Letter sent to Colleges requesting student number plans (with copies of divisional returns to inform their own planning)

Early May JSNPSC receives divisional SNP returns and commentary

Mid May Deadline for college SNP returns

Early June JSNPSC considers and agrees divisional and college SNP returns

June Outcomes reported to EdC (week 8), Conference of Colleges (week 9), Council (week 9) and PRAC (week 10)

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

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

2018

February *Gathered field guidance note and template issued to divisions*

*Divisions call for bids by the beginning of May*

May *Divisions conduct gathered field exercises*

June *Education Committee panel considers outcomes of divisional gathered field exercises. Endorses priorities for new courses for full development & QA scrutiny. Recommends any ‘headroom for modest growth’ figure for 2020-21 SNP round*

November *JSNPSC receives details of recommended headroom for growth figure for 2020-21*

2019

January *JSNPSC receives details of any exceptional cases for growth, proposed or accepted since the previous year’s Letter to Divisions*

February JSNPSC agrees annual Letter to Divisions *(incorporating details of agreed modest headroom for growth for 2020-21, and any exceptional cases for growth accepted*)

Letter sent to Divisions requesting student number plans (for 2019-20 and 2020-21)

Late March Deadline for divisional SNP returns

Mid April Letter sent to Colleges requesting student number plans (with copies of divisional returns to inform their own planning)

Early May JSNPSC receives divisional SNP returns and commentary

Mid May Deadline for college SNP returns

Early June JSNPSC considers and agrees divisional and college SNP returns

June Outcomes reported to EdC (week 8), Conference of Colleges (week 9), Council (week 9) and PRAC (week 10)

1. Proposals for new courses endorsed by divisions through the gathered field exercise and confirmed by the central review process will be worked up by the relevant department(s) for scrutiny by divisions (including review by external experts and the relevant committee of Conference) and approval by Education Committee in accordance with established quality assurance procedures. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. It will be necessary to expedite this process as much as possible given the compressed timetable: proposals for new courses for 2019-20 entry will need to be approved by Education Committee by the end of TT18. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The standard timetable be reviewed in the light of experience of the Trinity term 2018 round. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Student number plans in relation to new and existing non-matriculated courses should continue to be included in divisional returns for the annual student number planning round. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/pras/committees/jointbodies/jsnpsc/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Proposals for new courses will encompass *all* proposals for new degree-bearing (matriculated) courses, regardless of mode (full-time and part-time) or level of study (UG, PGT and PGR), with the exception of proposals for part-time variants of full-time PGT and PGR courses. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)