

Quality assurance calendar template

Introduction

This template describes those points of the academic year, common across the University, which are critical for quality assurance and enhancement.

It has been designed to take account the UK Quality Code¹ and is complementary to the *A brief guide to the UK Quality Code and its implementation at Oxford*.² The *Brief guide* provides a summary of the key points of the Quality Code and explains how the University's policies and practice at all levels relate to these, providing cross-references to the relevant *Policy & Guidance (P&G)* documents.³

The calendar template is intended to form the basis of the divisions' own quality assurance calendars and ensure consistency in the core activities across divisions. The activities described in the calendar are those by which a department or faculty can assure itself that it:

- sets and maintains threshold academic standards;
- manages the quality of students' learning opportunities;
- enhances students' learning opportunities; and that it
- manages the quality of its information about learning opportunities.

The calendar below and the *Brief guide* identify those processes which (along with the parallel work in colleges) underpin the quality assurance and quality enhancement arrangements for the collegiate University. Divisional calendars may contain additional items, reflecting operational and recurrent activities linked to, or deriving from, the high-level processes described here.

Version history

January 2015	Original publication	Approved by Quality Assurance Subcommittee
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¹ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

² <https://academic.web.ox.ac.uk/quality-assurance-governance>

³ <https://academic.web.ox.ac.uk/a-z-policies-guidance>

September 2015	Minor updates	Education Policy Support
12 November 2020	Updates to weblinks, removal of AQA, identification of essential (green) and suspended (amber) activity in response to COVID-19 pandemic	Approved by Chair of Quality Assurance Subcommittee
14 October 2021	Reinstatement of suspended activity except that related to Subject Benchmark Statements	Approved by Quality Assurance Subcommittee

Term	QA/QE Activity	Primary QA purpose	Main points	Reporting and other requirements
MT	Review of examiners' and external examiners' reports	Maintenance of standards, quality of learning opportunities c – see Brief Guide B6, B7, A3.2, A3.4.	<p>Any concerns raised in examiners' reports relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • academic standards • assessment procedures • and student performance <p>Items arising out of examiners' reports relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curriculum • course structure and assessment diversity • classification descriptors and examination conventions <p>Any indication that an external did not receive a response to the previous year's report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to division • Ensure or draft responses to external examiners (according to divisional practice) • Check any feedback mechanisms for students have been met (PGT courses) • Note any points for incorporation in the following year's examination conventions or suggested enhancements to practice • Provide reports (redacted as appropriate) for discussion at joint consultative committees (or equivalent) • Ensure reports (redacted as appropriate) are made available to all students
MT	Review of UG/PGT degree outcomes	Maintenance of academic standards and enhancement of educational provision		
MT	Examination conventions	Maintenance of academic standards and enhancement of educational provision – see Brief Guide B6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise examination conventions • Incorporate any changes agreed in the light of consideration of the reports for the previous year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make available to students within the required timescale

Term	QA/QE Activity	Primary QA purpose	Main points	Reporting and other requirements
MT	Review of Graduate Admissions	Maintenance of standards and enhancement of educational provision – see Brief Guide B11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers and quality of applications Over-offer ratios and outcomes Withdrawals and take-up of places Funding and studentship awards Use of English Language waivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to division (if required) Report on number of language waivers approved and provision for language teaching Note and report any changes in or enhancements to process or policy for subsequent admissions' round
MT	Review of National Student Survey and UG Barometer results	Quality of learning opportunities and enhancement of educational provision – see Brief Guide B3 & B4	NSS and Barometer: Consider overall satisfaction at course level, as well as responses to other questions (especially those re assessment, feedback and course organisation) compared to University UG averages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note and report to department or faculty committees on any changes or enhancements suggested by the returns Provide to joint consultative committees (or equivalent) and discuss any changes or enhancements suggested by the returns Report to division
HT	Changes in regulations	Maintenance of academic standards – see Brief Guide Part A	Ensure clarity about timetable for approval of regulation changes at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty/department level Divisional level Education Committee Be mindful of cumulative changes to courses over time which could constitute a 'major change' requiring Education Committee approval.	
HT	Review of Undergraduate Admissions Statistics	Maintenance of academic standards – see Brief Guide B2	Review undergraduate admissions data with particular reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers of applications Quality of applications Source and fee status of applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide confirmation of adherence to Common Framework Liaise with UAO or GAO re any proposed changes in policy or process

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HT	Review of student representation arrangements	Student engagement and enhancement of educational provision – see Brief Guide B5	Departments/faculties should formally reflect on and review the opportunities for student representation and involvement, including the arrangements to support that work, and any developments for the following year should be discussed and endorsed. (see <i>P&G student engagement and representation</i>).	To be undertaken through the UG and Graduate joint consultative committees (or equivalent) and departmental/faculty academic committees. Timetable consideration for an appropriate point in the year to draw on the experience of the current representatives and inform the work of those serving in the subsequent year.
HT	Review of undergraduate and PGT induction and study skills	Quality of learning opportunities and enhancement of educational provision – see Brief Guide B3	Timetable annual consideration of the role and effectiveness of faculty/department induction and support for the development of study skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and incorporate in faculty/department literature and process any enhancements or changes
HT	Review of PGR outcomes	Maintenance of academic standards and quality of learning opportunities and enhancement of educational provision		

Term	QA/QE Activity	Primary QA purpose	Main points	Reporting and other requirements
TT	Review of collaborative arrangements (including student placements and exchanges)	Maintenance of academic standards and quality of learning opportunities and enhancement of educational provision – see Brief Guide B10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check currency of the written agreement governing the collaborative arrangements. • Monitor the continued effectiveness of the programme and partnership/placement opportunity – taking particular account of student feedback 	Secure agreement for any proposed changes in process or policy.
TT	Review of PGR training provision	Quality of learning opportunities and enhancement of educational provision – see Brief Guide B11	Review provision of training for research students and its take-up – in students' own departments, other departments, Division and central services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report and discuss at relevant academic committee; report to division as appropriate. • Use returns to identify developments and enhancements for following year • Provide to graduate joint consultative committees (or equivalent) for discussion and input.
TT	Review of PG Barometer results	Quality of learning opportunities and enhancement of educational provision – see Brief Guide B3 & B4	Barometer: Consider overall satisfaction at course level, as well as responses to other questions (especially those re assessment, feedback and course organisation) compared to University PG averages,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note and report to department or faculty committees on any changes or enhancements suggested by the returns • Provide to joint consultative committees (or equivalent) and discuss any changes or enhancements suggested by the returns • Report to division

Term	QA/QE Activity	Primary QA purpose	Main points	Reporting and other requirements
TT	Proposals for the introduction of new courses	Maintenance of standards – Brief Guide B1 and A1, A3.1,	<p>Review emerging and in progress proposals for new courses or major amendments. Identify/monitor divisional and EdC requirements for approval, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timetable for approval and implementation • Required internal evidence – academic standard, course structure, assessment etc • Required internal consultation and external review • Internal faculty/departmental consultation (including with student representatives) • External consultation with divisional/EdC officers and with the relevant Conference Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals to division and (following endorsement) to Education Committee • Provide to joint consultative committees (or equivalent) for comment • Consultation with relevant Conference Committee
Long vacation	Nomination of examiners and assessors and appointment of chairs of examiners	Maintenance of academic standards –see Brief Guide B6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure nomination of examiners is made in time and with appropriate information required • Ensure chair of examiners for each programme is appointed 	Ensure appropriate approvals are made in good time

Term	QA/QE Activity	Primary QA purpose	Main points	Reporting and other requirements
Long Vacation	Revision and updating of material in course handbooks and websites	Information for students which is 'fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy' – see Brief Guide Part C; Maintenance of standards – see Brief Guide A.2.2. Definitive records.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check handbook includes information required by the <i>P&G on course information</i> • Ensure minimum duplication of information on departmental website with that on UG and PG admissions websites 	Report changes and updates to responsible academic committee; ensure a definitive record is available for all programmes for which the faculty/department is responsible.
As req'd	Preparation for and consideration of Divisional/Education Committee reviews of faculties and departments	Maintenance of academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and enhancement of educational provision – see Brief Guide B8, A3.3, A3.4;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and preparation for upcoming reviews including consideration of the self-evaluation document. • Overall consideration of the review report and identification any significant areas of concern for quality assurance related to academic standards, learning opportunities, and the provision of information; • Consider recommendations for quality assurance improvements and quality enhancement. • Preparation for interim review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure responses and action plan provided for consideration by Division and Education Committee • Ensure responses are discussed at relevant faculty/department committees

Term	QA/QE Activity	Primary QA purpose	Main points	Reporting and other requirements
As req'd	Provision of information to external examiners	Maintenance of academic standards - see Brief Guide B7	Ensure external examiners are provided with the information they require to fulfil their role, particularly ensuring that new external examiners are provided with introductory material as appropriate.	
As req'd	Consideration of reports from Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)	Maintenance of academic standards – see Brief Guide Part A.	Ensure timely response and action plan to PSRB (if required)	Ensure consideration by the appropriate departmental committee and reporting on to Division and Education Committee (if required).
As req'd (suspended)	Consideration of revised Subject Benchmark Statements	Maintenance of academic standards – see Brief Guide Part A.	Revised (and new) subject benchmark statements are published periodically.	Ensure consideration by the appropriate departmental committee and discuss any changes or enhancements to the course as a result.