



# University of Otago Reviews: Administrative, College and Special Topic

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Guidelines for panel members: 2020

# 1 Overview

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## 1.1 What are the guiding principles behind the Review Process?

Principles for the conduct of reviews at the University of Otago were approved by the Senate in May 1995 and the University Council in June 1995. The full document is included as an appendix, **(Document A)**. Key points from that document are:

- The primary purpose of quality assurance is to review and to effect improvement in the University's teaching, research and out-reach activities. To achieve this, a rolling programme of formal reviews will be instituted, building on the sequence of reviews begun in 1992. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will be responsible for monitoring all aspects of this process and will regularly report to the Vice-Chancellor.
- The starting point for any review is the preparation of self-review materials.
- Each review will be in the form of a peer assessment by a panel comprising University staff as well as colleagues external to the University and members of relevant employer groups and professional bodies.
- The University will give serious consideration to a panel's recommendations, implementing all those within its discretion and resources.

**Document B** provides a diagrammatical overview of the Review Process.

## 1.2 How are the Review Principles implemented?

The Review Principles are implemented through a variety of internal review types, over which the University has control, each with different foci and objectives. A Reviews Framework has been developed to articulate and clarify the different review types and the inter-relationships between them. **(Document C)**.

## 1.3 How are Reviews scheduled?

In its Review Principles, the University made a commitment to review each aspect of its operations at least once every ten years. In order to monitor this commitment, a rolling schedule of reviews has been developed. Called the Review Schedule, it serves as advance notice of those areas due for review.

## 1.4 What is an Administrative Review?

An Administrative Review is a review of a non-academic division, department, section, unit, college or area (hereafter called Administrative Unit). The foci are the goals, objectives, core activities and services of the Administrative Unit under review. It covers an examination of the Administrative Unit's structure and management, core services and activities, and physical, IT resources and health and safety issues.

## 1.5 What is a Special Topic Review?

A Special Topic Review is usually initiated in response to a specific issue or concern, or upon the request of a particular group or individual (known as the sponsor). These reviews are ad hoc in nature and take place as the need arises. The terms of reference and selection of panel members will vary from review to review.

## 2 Key participants in the Review Process

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### 2.1 Composition of a Review Panel

The number of Panel Members will vary depending upon the nature, size and scope of the Review. Generally the composition of a Panel will include as appropriate:

Convenor	A senior staff member or Emeritus Professor of the University of Otago, from outside the unit under review and preferably from a different division, with experience and expertise in regard to the Terms of Reference.
International	A senior university staff member or similar level counterpart from a relevant area, and/or a senior member of an appropriate industry group, professional association or society.
External	One or two individuals: Normally a senior staff member of a New Zealand university or similar level counterpart from a relevant area external to the University of Otago, and/or a senior member of an appropriate industry group, professional association or society.
Internal	One or two staff members from the University of Otago. Preferably one from the home division (or, in the case of Health Sciences, the home School e.g. UOC, BMS) and one from another division.
Graduate	A recent (maximum of three years) graduate*.
Review Secretary	Either; one of the Quality Advancement Unit's Review Administrators or an appropriately experienced University of Otago General Staff member from outside the unit under review. This person will be appointed by the Reviews Manager, Quality Advancement Unit.
Contact Person	A member of the unit under review who has knowledge of the Review and who is the first point of contact for the Panel via the Review Secretary.

\* The Graduate must not be employed by the unit under review and if a PhD candidate, must not be supervised by staff members of the unit under review.

**Conflict of Interest:** Panel members are required to declare all perceived and real conflicts of interest. A declaration form will be sent to Panel members by the Review Secretary.

## 2.2 The Panel - roles and responsibilities

### Convenor

The Convenor is the primary point of contact between members of the Review Panel and the Head of Division/Pro-Vice-Chancellor (PVC)/Director.

Duties include:

- meeting with the PVC/Director and the Head of the unit individually, to discuss issues in the early stages of the review process;
- consulting with the Panel to:
  - Identify key issues arising from the Self Review;
  - Identify stakeholders/submitters with whom the Panel should meet;
  - Determine lines of questioning during the Panel Visit;
  - Clarify the role and contribution of individual Panel Members e.g. assign responsibility for a particular heading from the Terms of Reference;
- submitting the Report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) (Academic) within a reasonable time frame (generally 6 – 8 weeks after the Review visit);
- meeting with the DVC (Academic) and the sponsoring PVC to discuss the Review findings following submission of the Review Report.

The Convenor may also request the DVC (Academic) to augment the Review Panel by the appointment of an additional member should it become clear that this step is necessary to ensure a thorough review of the Department.

### Panel Members

The Panel members are expected to serve on the Panel for the duration of the Review (normally three full days) and to assist the Convenor in the drafting of the Report.

Review Panel Members have responsibility for:

- where appropriate, conducting themselves throughout the Review as independently representing their profession/discipline/area of expertise rather than their University or Employer;
- familiarising themselves with the Self Review and other documentation, and Review Guidelines in preparation for the Review Visit;
- providing feedback on drafts of the Review Report, and assisting with its writing as required;
- endorsing the final Review Report before its submission to the DVC (Academic).

### Review Secretary

The Secretary will work with the Convenor, providing organisational, administrative, and secretarial assistance before, during and after the Review. Duties include: publicising the Review, calling for submissions, distributing all written materials to the Panel, arranging travel and accommodation for the external panel members, booking a venue for the Review, catering arrangements, attending Panel meetings and interviews and taking notes during the Review Panel Visit. The Secretary will provide any other administrative support (e.g. collation of material, drafting of invitations to meet

the Review Panel, assisting with the final production of the Review Report) as required by the Convenor.

## 2.3 The Administrative Unit

### Heads of Administrative Units

Heads of administrative units are the immediate leaders of the unit under review and will be expected to consult with their Head of Division on the composition of the Panel and the Terms of Reference for the Review. Heads of units also have responsibility for selecting the Panel and confirming dates of the review; submission of the Self Review document at least four weeks prior to the Review; providing supporting documents and additional information as required by the Panel.

Post-review, the Head of the unit will be expected to consider and implement the recommendations of the Review Panel and to report on progress as required.

## 2.4 The University

### Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

The Vice-Chancellor has delegated authority for the overall direction of the University's rolling programme of formal reviews to the DVC (Academic) as articulated in the Guiding Principles for the Conduct of Reviews approved by the Senate in May 1995 and the University Council in June 1995.

The DVC (Academic) has final approval on the panel selection and Terms of Reference for the Review.

For an overview of the role of the DVC (Academic), please refer to **Document D**.

### Heads of Divisions/PVCs

Heads of Divisions/PVCs have responsibility for consulting with the Head of the unit over the co-ordination of the Review Process, including sign-off on the Panel and Terms of Reference. They play a central role in facilitating and documenting progress made towards the implementation of recommendations made by the Review Panel.

Depending on the Divisional structure, the Head of Division/PVC may delegate responsibility for many of these tasks to a Dean, or Divisional Administrator as appropriate.

For an overview of the role of the Head of Division/PVC (and Deans) please refer to **Document D**.

## 2.5 The Quality Advancement Unit

The Quality Advancement Unit is responsible for managing and monitoring the overall review process, refer to **Document F**.

Members of the Unit are available to provide advice on any aspect of the review process and to liaise with University staff as required.

### Review Secretary

This person will be appointed by the Reviews Manager. The Unit has two Dunedin-based Review Administrators who normally carry out the role of Review Secretary. Adjunct Review Secretaries are appointed as required.

### **Reviews Manager**

The QAU Reviews Manager is the main point of contact between QAU and the unit under review, and is responsible for the coordination of the Review Process and advising the unit under review and the Panel, as required. The Reviews Manager is responsible for appointing the Review Secretary, provides the DVC (Academic) with an executive analysis of the final Review Report and attends the Report Approval Meeting.

## 3 The Review

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### 3.1 What is the visit programme?

A Review is normally held over three days.

The visit programme is prepared by the Convenor and the Review Secretary in consultation with other panel members. The visit programme includes meetings with staff, students and other interested parties. A tour of the facilities may also be required.

On the final day of the Review, the Panel present their preliminary findings to the Head of the unit. Depending on the size of the unit and the number of staff, the Panel may also choose to make a second presentation to the staff as a whole. This session is quite brief and it is not usually a forum for discussion.

### 3.2 What is the Review Report?

The Review Report is a public document within the University of Otago community and, once approved for release, can be obtained from the Quality Advancement Unit by any member of the University. It outlines the Panel's findings in accordance with its Terms of Reference, and provides sufficient detail to enable a good understanding of the issues leading to the subsequent recommendations. It is also expected to include commendations and highlight areas of good practice. An Executive Summary at the beginning of the Report highlights the key findings and recommendations.

**The Review Panel must be able to demonstrate in the Report how they reached their conclusions, and cite the evidence used to support the recommendations that have been reached.**

Recommendations are to be directed to the appropriate person or body e.g. the Head of the unit/PVC/Head of Division. The responsibility for progressing the recommendation then lies with that person/body.

Preparation of the Report is co-ordinated by the Convenor of the Review Panel and written in collaboration with other panel members. It is anticipated that the Report will be completed 6-8 weeks after the review visit.



## 4 Confidentiality

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Members of a Review Panel have access to a great deal of material during a review. The Panel must treat as confidential any personal information, commercially sensitive material and intellectual property provided to it.

Beyond the production of the Self Review, all aspects of the review process are confidential to the members of the Panel. The only documents that can be viewed by others before and during the process are the Terms of Reference and the list of Panel Members.

Enquiries made during the Review are to be directed to the Review Secretary or the Convenor.

### 4.1 Submissions

Units under review are asked to provide the Review Secretary with the names of individuals or organisations who have an interest in the unit and who may be invited by the Panel to make a submission. All submissions are confidential to the Panel. This includes the names of those who have made submissions, and any other information about such submissions.

### 4.2 Review programme of meetings

The Panel visit programme is confidential to the Panel. Units under review are not entitled to this information. Enquiries made during the Review are to be directed to the Review Secretary or the Convenor.

### 4.3 Self Review

The Self Review is confidential to the unit that produced it, and the Review Panel. Neither QAU nor the Review Panel will share this information with others without prior permission from the department who produced it.

### 4.4 Review Report

The final Report will become a public document within the University Community. The Report is confidential to the Panel until finalised and approved for release by the DVC (Academic). Upon release, the Report is no longer confidential except in that it is for internal University use only. Any external use or distribution requires the authorisation of the DVC (Academic).

As the Report is about an organisation, it will not normally identify individuals. It is expected that every effort will be made to ensure that, whenever possible, concerns shall be framed in terms of the system – not the individual.

Where there is a contentious issue and an individual is identifiable (due to their position), the Panel should provide the individual with an opportunity to discuss the matter with a member of the Panel, and ensure that issues are resolved before publication of the Report.

### 4.5 Confidential matters beyond the scope of the Review

Panels can be challenged by matters of a confidential and/or personal nature or financial concerns which are generally beyond the scope of the Terms of Reference and the Review Panel's brief. The Panel have the authority to submit a confidential letter to the DVC (Academic) so that such issues can be dealt with under a separate process.

#### **4.6 Confidential disposal of Review documentation**

All material generated by the Review (i.e. submissions, the Panel Visit Programme, drafts of the Report, notes taken during the review, electronic files) is to be confidentially disposed of, or returned to the Secretary, upon the completion of a review..

## 5 Post-review reporting

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### 5.1 What happens to the Review Report?

The Convenor will send a copy to the Head of the unit to check for factual inaccuracies. The Head has two weeks from receipt of the Report to reply with any factual corrections. If no corrections are received within the two weeks, it will be assumed that the Report is factually correct.

Upon final approval from the Panel, the Report is sent by the Convenor to the QAU Reviews Manager, who provides the DVC (Academic) with an executive analysis and a copy of the Report.

The DVC (Academic) convenes a Report Approval Meeting and discusses the Report's key findings with the Head of Division/PVC, Dean (if appropriate), the Convenor and the QAU Reviews Manager to reflect on the Review, the Report and the outcomes. Any confidential matters may also be discussed at this meeting. The DVC (Academic) also discusses the Report's key findings with the Vice-Chancellor as appropriate.

Depending on schedules, this stage can take up to several weeks.

#### When will the Review Report be released?

The DVC (Academic) generally authorises release of the Review Report at the conclusion of the Report Approval Meeting. QAU then distributes the Report, first to those directly involved in the Review, then broadly across the University, as per QAU distribution procedures.

Notice of release of the Report is posted on the QAU website and an all-department email is sent.

#### How are the recommendations implemented?

Following receipt of the final approved Report, it is suggested that an "Implementation Plan" is prepared by the Head of the unit (and/or the PVC or Divisional Head) for their own use; this will provide a framework for action to be taken in response to the recommendations in the Review Report.

**Time Frame:** An Implementation Plan should be developed within a month of receipt of the Report.

### 5.2 How is implementation monitored?

Progress towards implementation of the Review recommendations is monitored through the submission of two Status Reports to the DVC (Academic) by the PVC and the Head of the unit.

The Status Report is a detailed report on the progress made towards implementation of each recommendation in the Review Report. It reports on those recommendations implemented successfully as well as those not yet implemented, and the reasons for this. The preferred reporting format is for the Head of the unit to submit a full Status Report to their Head of Division/PVC, and then for the Head of Division/PVC, and Dean where appropriate, to prepare their own Report(s); all reports are then submitted to the DVC (Academic).

For those recommendations targeted to areas or individuals other than the area reviewed, such as Property Services or ITS, it is expected that the Head will contact the relevant group to obtain an update in order that they can report on progress.

Two formal reports are required during the follow-up phase:

- the first Status Report: to be submitted to the DVC (Academic) after six months; and,
- the second Status Report: to be submitted to the DVC (Academic) after two years.

### 5.3 Four Year Mid-Cycle Assessment

An additional formal report, known as the Mid-Cycle Assessment, is now required at four years. This task is undertaken by the relevant PVC in consultation with the Head of the unit.

The University norm for departmental review is once every 10 years but the University's Quality Advancement Reviews Policy allows for earlier interim and targeted reviews to be undertaken as appropriate. The primary purpose of this Mid-Cycle Assessment is to confirm the next review date for the unit concerned.

In conducting this exercise, consideration is to be given to any outstanding recommendations and an assessment of the level of commitment to the recommendations; the current status of the area including significant changes; commentary on whether the review has added value to the Department/Division; a re-evaluation of the categorisation allocated at the time of the Review Report's release; and, either a recommendation for an earlier review date, a targeted topic review to address particular outstanding issues, or confirmation of the 10 year review date will be required.

## APPENDICES

### DOCUMENT A

## Review Principles

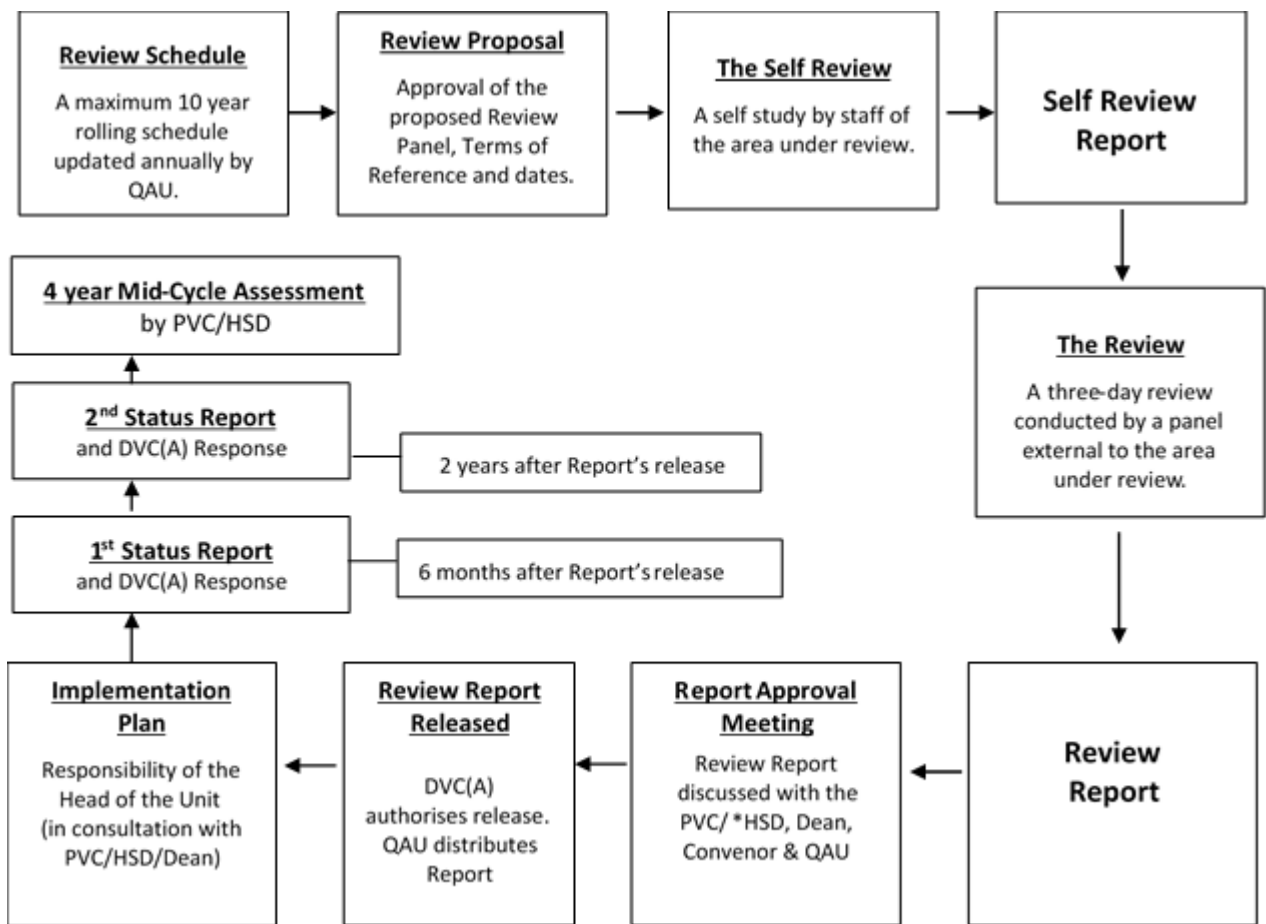
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- The primary purpose of quality assurance is to review and to effect improvement in the University's teaching, research and out-reach activities. To achieve this, a rolling programme of formal reviews will be instituted, building on the sequence of reviews begun in 1992. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will be responsible for monitoring all aspects of this process and will regularly report to the Vice-Chancellor.
- Review will involve reviews of teaching and research programmes, as well as of the University's policies and systems for assuring quality. Some reviews may be of a Division, Faculty, Centre or other administrative unit. Some may concern the entire University.
- Each aspect of the University's operations will be reviewed at least once every ten years, with the process initiated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) or upon the request of a particular group.
- Before a review begins, a budget will be determined, staff will receive training in the preparation of reviews, and access to useful sources of information and administrative support will be provided.
- The starting point for any review is the preparation of self-review materials.
- Each review will be in the form of a peer assessment by a panel comprising University staff as well as colleagues external to the University and members of relevant employer groups and professional bodies.
- Each such panel will conduct its inquiries on-campus and submit a written report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), who will discuss any recommendations with the Vice-Chancellor.
- The University will give serious consideration to a panel's recommendations, implementing all those within its discretion and resources.

***Approved by Senate in May 1995 and the University Council in June 1995***

***Amended 2015***

## Overview of the Review process



\*HSD = Head of Service Division

## Reviews Framework

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### How are the Review Principles implemented?

The Review Principles are implemented through a variety of internal review types, over which the University has control, each with different foci and objectives. A Reviews Framework has been developed to articulate and clarify the different review types and the inter-relationships between them.



### Combined Administrative/Programme Review

- Occasionally a programme of study is housed in an academic unit, such as Science Communication or a Research Centre such as the National Centre for Peace & Conflict Studies, the Review of that Programme is undertaken in conjunction with an Administrative Review. The standard Terms of Reference for Administrative and Programme Reviews are combined and customised as appropriate.

### Residential College Review

- The foci of a Residential College Review (hereafter referred to as a College) are the goals, objectives, core activities and services of the College under Review. It includes an examination of the College's ethos, management, resident welfare, and core services and activities including physical, IT resources and health and safety issues.

### Special Topic Review

- A Special Topic Review is usually initiated in response to a specific issue or concern, or upon the request of a particular group or individual (known as the sponsor). These reviews are ad hoc in nature and take place as the need arises. The Terms of Reference and selection of reviewers will vary from review to review. Special Topic Reviews may include specific areas or themes.

**NB:** *The University is also subject to external reviews (i.e. accreditation reviews) owned by an external body, such as a professional association, and carried out by a group that is largely or entirely external to the institution (e.g. AMC Review, Academic Audit, CUAP Graduating Year Reviews). These external reviews are taken into account when the University formulates its review programme each year.*



## DOCUMENT D

# Role of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

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### Pre-review

- Approve the Review Proposal prior to issuing official letters of invitation to members of the Review Panel.
- Augment the Review Panel by the appointment of an additional member should it become clear that this step is necessary to ensure a thorough Review of the Department.

### Post-review

- At the Report Approval Meeting, discuss the Review findings with the Review Panel Convenor and PVC/Head of Division/Chief Operating Officer and suggest possible amendments or clarification as required.
- Acknowledge the contribution of members of the Review Panel following approval of the Review Panel Report.
- Take the lead on matters of a confidential nature beyond the scope of the Review.
- Discuss the outcomes of the Review with the Vice-Chancellor, recognizing that in some cases it may be more appropriate for the PVC/Head of Division to meet directly with the Vice-Chancellor.
- Authorise the release of the Review Report.
- Report, where appropriate, key findings of the Review to various University Committees and individuals.
- Request two Status Reports on progress towards meeting implementation targets from the PVC; six months following the official release of the Review Report and then two years after that same date.
- Respond to the Status Reports in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor as appropriate
- Receive the completed Four Year Mid-Cycle Assessment prior to its submission to the Quality Advancement Committee.

# Role of Head of Division/Pro-Vice-Chancellors

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## Pre-review

- Advise Heads of the Review Schedule.
- In consultation with the Head of the unit under review agree and approve the Panel Members.
- In consultation with the Head of the unit under review, agree and approve the Terms of Reference for the Review.

## Post-review

- At the Report Approval Meeting, discuss the Review Report with the Review Convenor and DVC (Academic) and suggest possible amendments or clarification as required.
- In consultation with the Head of unit, consider the development of an implementation plan based on the recommendations of the Review Report.
- In consultation with the Head of unit, document progress towards implementation of the recommendations made in the Review Report.
- In consultation with the Head of unit, prepare Status Reports at six months and two years for submission to the DVC (Academic)
- Complete the Four Year Mid-Cycle Assessment to confirm the next scheduled review date or propose intermediary actions to satisfy any outstanding recommendations.

## Role of the Deans (UOW, UOC, DSM, BMS)

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### Pre-review

- Approve the Review Proposal Form following discussion with the Head of unit, before submission to the PVC Health Sciences and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

### Post-review

- At the Report Approval Meeting, discuss the Review Report with the Review Convenor, DVC (Academic) and PVC at the Report Approval Meeting and suggest possible amendments or clarification as required.
- Contribute to the status reports.

## Role of the University Quality Advancement Unit

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The QAU Reviews Manager, is responsible for the management and monitoring of the Review process.

- Advise PVCs of the Review Schedule.
- Send annual reminders of forthcoming reviews (covering the next 3 years) to the PVCs.
- Provide information and guidance to University staff on all aspects of the Review process.
- Follow up on all aspects of the Review process as required including Status Reports and the Four Year Mid-Cycle Assessment.
- Draft letters, prepare reports and provide advice to the DVC (Academic) on all aspects of the Review Process.
- Maintain the Reviews web page on the Quality Advancement website from which information and documents relating to the Review Process can be accessed.

## DOCUMENT E

# Supporting documentation for the Review Panel

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University of Otago official documents such as the Strategic Direction to 2020, are available at

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/about/official-documents/index.html>

The Self Review document should include most of the following information or, it can be provided on request via the Review Secretary.

- Copies of Divisional Strategic Plan and any other relevant strategic planning documents
- appropriate diagrams, charts or descriptions of the unit's organisational structure
- Biosketches with photos of staff
- Staff profile (names, age profiles, levels) – and comments on the adequacy of the level of support staff
- Information on staff training and development initiatives and associated procedures
- Information on professional, consultancy and community service contributions by staff
- Overview of basic financial position – including any constraints and/or access to additional resources
- Performance indicators
- Participation in benchmarking activities
- Space Assessment Report from Property Services Division
- Copy of a recent report from the Health and Safety Officer and Security Audit from the Deputy Proctor.