



UNIVERSITY OF
Otago

**Internal reviews: a holistic
approach to change**
Working together to realise big ideas

Megan Wilson
Reviews Manager
Quality Advancement Unit, University of Otago

Everything you weren't aware you wanted to know about the University of Otago

- Founded in 1869; NZ's 1st university & the 3rd university in Australasia
- Four academic divisions: Humanities, Sciences, Health Sciences, Business
 - including NZ's first medical school and NZ's only schools of Dentistry and Surveying
- 76 academic departments; 1,532 FTE academic and research-only staff
- 12 flagship multidisciplinary research centres; 17 research themes
- Hosts two of the most widely-recognised longitudinal studies in the world:
 - Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study (1972-73)
 - Christchurch Health and Development Study (1977)

Everything you weren't aware you wanted to know about the University of Otago

- 195+ undergraduate and postgraduate programmes
- 85% of students from outside Dunedin
- A residential campus in Dunedin; health sciences campuses in Christchurch, Wellington; specialist facilities in Invercargill & Auckland
- 15 residential colleges accommodating c.3,500 students
- 20,814 students by headcount (18,547 EFTS)
- 2,723 international students from 100 countries (13.1% of the student population)
- 3,500+ postgraduates, including 1,410 PhD students
- 151st in the 2017/18 QS world university rankings; in the top 100 in 12 subject areas (2017)
- World's southernmost university...

... we're also recognised as one of the 16 most beautiful campuses in the world...



So... who gets reviewed?

EVERYONE!



Types of Review

- academic departments, including research centres
 - programmes
- combined department / programme
 - administrative
- combined administrative / programme
 - residential colleges
 - special topic

385 reviews since 1985
240 areas reviewed, reporting to 20
different divisional groups
...including a 'review of reviews' and a 'review of the
reviewers' ...



Review framework

What is the current situation of the area under review?

Where does the area want to be in 5 years' time?

What does the area need to do to get there?

What can the University do to support the area to achieve its goals?

What does the area do well?

Key considerations

Review and evaluate core activities:

- Teaching
- Research
- Service and Professional/Clinical practice

Including:

- administration, operations, equity, facilities, resources, support structures
- internal, regional, national and international contexts
- commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi via the University's Māori Strategic Framework;
- the commitment to the goals of the University's Pacific Strategic Framework;
- support for and contribution to the University's Sustainability Strategic Framework;
- future directions, strategic planning, goals and challenges.

Being reviewed is an opportunity...

- Enhance what the area is doing
- Involve everyone
- Focus on the future
- Highlight what you are doing well and the barriers to doing even better
- Don't hold back on your needs
- Don't be shy to use the panel's expertise
- Pick a panel that will be constructive
- Focus on key issues that will make major differences
- Insist on action

What's the key to a good review?

THE PANEL!



Convenor

International Representative

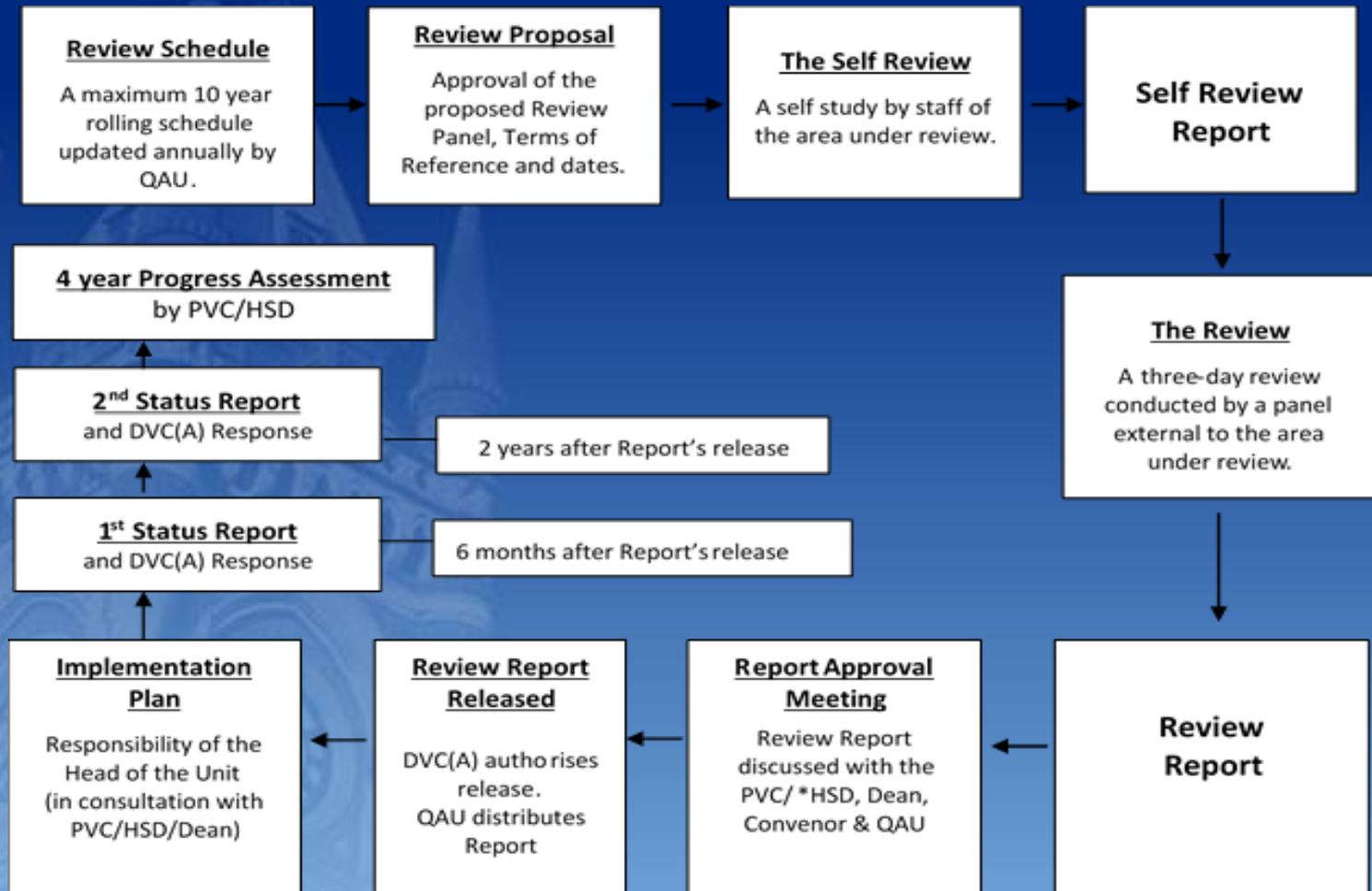
External NZ Representatives

Internal Representatives

Recent Graduate / Senior Student

Secretary

The review process... sometimes seems never-ending... but closes the feedback loop!!



...and again...just because we have one of the 16 most beautiful campuses in the world...



Otago

Benefits of internal review

- Primary focus on the area under review but in relation to cognate areas
- Independent peer assessment
- Allows internal and external stakeholders to contribute to the well-being and future of the area through confidential submissions
- Promotion of the positive aspects of performance and activities
- Identification of new opportunities, collaborations and alternative ways of doing things
- A chance to air concerns without the formality of HR involvement...
- Provides the opportunity for institutional analysis to effect change

Disadvantages of internal review

- *Perceived* conflicts of interest and the pursuit of personal agendas
- Impact on workload for the period of review
- Varying engagement from decision-makers due to conflicting viewpoints and/or over-review
- Lack of immediate identifiable action leading to a sense that nothing happens
- Complacency; apathy over making meaningful submissions

How do we compare to external review / accreditation?

- Strategic planning focus rather than compliance
- The area under review has the opportunity to frame its own future within the boundaries of the institution
- Greater depth of investigation – everyone has an opportunity to contribute
- Recommendations and commendations that align with wider University's strategic goals, the focus of the relevant division and are compatible with the culture of the area and ethos of staff...

How are we doing?

...and how do we know we're delivering 'good change' ...

- Post-review we survey convenors, panel members and heads of area...
- We have reviewed the review process - twice!
- Review Administrators with a comprehensive understanding of the University and are valued by Convenors and staff has led to...
- A culture of TRUST... meaning frank and open discussions at all levels... resulting in...
- Requests for reviews outside the formal programme and earlier than the schedule dictates...

...which has led to...

- A positive impact on teaching and learning process, particularly in curriculum & programme development
- Changes to departmental management including supervision of graduate students
- Greater alignment with the University's strategic direction and other anchor plans (MSF, PSF...)
- Enhanced and strengthened relationships with external stakeholders: business, professional and other communities

...and as a result we have...

- Identified, developed and strengthened systems to ensure needs are met, eg.:
 - monitoring of new programmes
 - established advisory boards and enhanced committee structures
 - alignment with accreditation requirements
- Established new departments, independent research centres and programmes to ensure there is the appropriate focus on a discipline... merged others who needed greater support
- And we've delivered major equipment such as...

... a boat!



...just so we can explore even further south...