



Procedures for the Review of Administrative Units

Introduction

Definitions:

"Administrative unit" as used in this document refers to a unit reporting to the Vice-President (Academic) or to someone else who reports to the Vice-President (Academic).

"VP" means the Vice-President (Academic). It is understood that some or all of the responsibilities of the VP may be assigned to the Associate Vice-President (Academic).

This document is intended to provide administrative units with procedures which are comparable to the procedures for academic units but which recognize the distinctive nature of these units within the University. The review of administrative units is carried out under the authority of the senior executive group and is designed to support the objectives of the University. The purpose of the review of units is:

- To evaluate the quality, success, and role of units in the fulfillment of their own and the University's mission and strategic goals
- To encourage strategic planning, innovation and improvement in units
- To provide an occasion for units to identify opportunities and find ways to pursue them
- To avail of fresh perspectives from colleagues outside of Memorial.

This review process should be regarded as formative. That is, it is an opportunity for the members of the unit to work collegially to identify areas of strength and find ways of improving upon what it does.

The Process

1. The VP meets with members of the unit concerned to provide information about the review process. The unit can, at that time, establish additional, discipline-specific criteria and indicators for the review as necessary.

2. The Review Panel is appointed according to the procedures below.
3. The unit conducts a thorough Self-Study and submits this to the responsible VP for distribution to the Review Panel.
4. The Panel reviews the Self-Study, and may request additional information from the unit.
5. The Panel conducts a one or two-day review of the unit. When completed, the draft Panel Report is submitted to the VP who checks it for factual accuracy. Following any necessary revisions by the Panel, the VP circulates it to staff within the centre.
6. The unit prepares a formal response to the Panel Report and submits this to the VP.
7. The VP and the Director/ Manager of the Unit meet to discuss the final Review Report (consisting of the Self- Study, Review Panel Report, and the unit's response), particularly any recommendations that have been made. Together they formulate an action plan, including a timeline and an assignment of responsibilities, which is then circulated to professional staff within the unit for discussion and comment.
8. The VP and the Director/ Manager hold a follow-up meeting to make any amendments to the action plan that may be necessary.
9. The Review Report and the action plan are forwarded to the VP for consideration. A copy of the action plan is distributed to staff within the unit.
10. One year after submission of the Report, the VP will receive from the Director/Manager of the unit a report on progress towards implementation of the action plan.

Organization and Responsibilities

A Coordinator, reporting to the appropriate VP, is designated to facilitate the process of Administrative reviews. Normally this will be the APR coordinator in the Centre for Institutional Analysis and Planning. This individual shall:

- confer with the Director/Manager of the unit under review to determine a budget that will cover data collection and analysis, personnel time, payments to external reviewers, travel and miscellaneous office expenses
- assist in arranging for site visits by external reviewers (travel, accommodations, hosting, etc.)
- assist, as required, in the gathering of supporting materials for both the Self-Study and the Panel Review
- serve as custodian for review documents subsequent to the Review
- perform other duties, as required, in support of the review process

The Coordinator will be appointed by the VP. Each review is conducted by a Review Panel. The Panel will normally be composed of four members, all from areas of expertise related, so far as possible, to that of the unit under review. Two of the panelists will be Memorial University of Newfoundland faculty or professional staff not associated with the activities of the unit under review, and two will be faculty or professionally qualified individuals from other institutions or recognized experts in the field from outside of the University community.

1. One Memorial University of Newfoundland member from outside the unit under review chosen by the VP.
2. One Memorial University of Newfoundland member from outside the unit chosen by members of the unit under review.

3. Two external members representing the area of activity/research of the unit under review, chosen by the VP.

On occasion, based on the scope of the review, the Director/Manager may recommend to the VP that only one external reviewer be enlisted for the Review Panel.

The VP will appoint one of the internal Panelists to be Chair of the Panel. After consulting with the Chair of the Panel and the Director/Manager of the unit to be reviewed, the Coordinator will establish the time of the review and will set a schedule for the accomplishment of the review.

The full review process can be summarized into three parts: Self-Study, Review, and Follow-up. In preparation for the review, the unit will undertake a self-study based on the guidelines that appear later in this document. The self-study phase is central, providing the basis for further deliberations and goal setting within the context of University priorities.

The preparation of documentation for the review will be the responsibility of a member of the unit designated by the Director/Manager. The responsibilities of others are as follows:

Staff members will provide:

- either a CV, a standard Research Council personal information form, or other documentation of activity since the last review.
- any additional materials pertinent to the member's research projects not sufficiently covered by CV or personal information report.

Panelists may request additional materials as needed. The VP will ensure that all interests within the unit are included in the review process. All Panel members will participate in all aspects of the review and in the formation of the Panel's written report. It is the responsibility of the Review Panel chairperson to ensure that members of the Panel work together throughout the review and that the final report reflects the views of all members of the Panel.

The Panel's draft Report should be completed within one month of the review and forwarded by the Panel chairperson to the Coordinator for transmission to the VP in accordance with point 5 of the process. The VP is responsible for keeping the unit informed of actions taken pursuant to the review.

The purposes of the Self-Study are:

- Description, mission statement, and assessment of the unit (organization, projects, programs, management, resources, and where applicable, teaching and courses);
- Description of plans or proposed innovations for the unit for the future;
- Assessment of the contribution of the unit to the University and its priorities.

A. Strategic Objectives

1. What are the strategic objectives of the unit?
2. To what extent are the unit's stated objectives being met? What is the evidence for these achievements?

3. How does the unit support the mission and objectives of the University and other programs within the University?
4. How are the efforts of the unit focused upon achieving the level of excellence (provincial, national, international) expected by its mandate?

B. Staff Contribution

1. How effectively are the professional staff engaged with relevant professional communities locally, regionally, and nationally?
2. How effectively are the professional staff active, and recognized, participants in regional, national, and international units?
3. Are the staff generating a level of external grants and contracts appropriate to the unit's mission?
4. Are the contracts and grants received by staff consistent with the strategic goals of the unit?

C. Administrative Support/Efficiency

1. Is the unit receiving appropriate direct resources and support from the University?
2. Is the unit pursuing sources of appropriate support from other units, funding agencies and/or corporations outside of the University?
3. How adequate and effective are infrastructural resources and support (e.g., media, communications, space, recruitment, equipment)?
4. How effectively is the unit able to generate external funding sufficient to undertake activities and projects that enhance its normal operations?
5. How effectively does the unit promote new initiatives, plans, collegial spirit, and active community involvement?
6. What major initiatives and improvements should professional staff, and administrators be taking to enhance the unit?
7. How well are administrative and professional support staff contributing to the research and strategic goals of the unit?
8. How effectively does the unit deploy its resources?

Additional documentation in support of the above should include:

- A copy of the unit's budget.
- A copy of Memorial University's Strategic Framework.
- Breakdown of FTE, professionals and salaried staff by rank, function, workload.
- Statement concerning any proposed changes to the unit's resources and an explanation of these proposed changes.

It is important that the self-study achieve a proper balance between details and inclusiveness, and available resources (especially time). The self-study should provide enough information to be useful and understandable by professionals outside the unit within and outside the University. The self-study should be considered as the central element for the external review process.

Review Schedule and List of Responsibilities

After the members of the Panel have discussed procedures among themselves, they will meet with the VP and the Director/Manager of the unit under review. This meeting serves as an orientation to the review and gives panelists the opportunity to ask questions about the process and the unit. The VP or the Director/Manager then escorts the panelists on a tour of the unit's facilities and of other campus facilities pertinent to the unit's operations.

It is important that all professional staff of the unit have the opportunity to meet with the Panel. Time should be set aside for individuals and groups of faculty, professional staff, support staff and, where applicable, student representatives to meet with the panelists. The panel should also have the opportunity to meet with other stakeholders in the unit, both from within and outside the University, as appropriate. Members of the Panel may also conduct any other interviews that they or the Manager have requested. With the consent of the VP and members of the unit concerned, some interviews may be conducted, and information gathered, by the Memorial internal panel members prior to the arrival of the external reviewers.

The review will include time for the panelists to meet alone to outline their report and to distribute the writing responsibilities. At the conclusion of the review, the team will hold an exit interview with the VP and the Director/Manager of the unit. The Report is due one month following the completion of the review.

The Review Report

As much as is reasonably possible, the report should place the unit under review in the larger context of units of a similar kind in Canada, and where appropriate outside of Canada, and should assess the unit according to the norms for such units. It should address any major issues facing the unit, comment on the compatibility of the unit's mission, achievements, plans and goals with those of other units associated with the unit and with those of the University mission, and suggest strategies for achieving unit and University goals. The Report should contain recommendations which, in the view of the Panel, will lead to improvements in the program. The Report should focus on the unit as a whole without reference to individuals and be written to inform both the unit and the VP. To accomplish these purposes the Report should, where applicable and appropriate, consider the following points:

1. How well are staff resources being used?
2. How successful is the unit in implementing University employment equity policies?
3. Are staff workloads equitable and appropriate to the unit's missions?
4. Are administrative decisions made and administrative tasks carried out efficiently and effectively?
5. Are the staffs associations with regional, national and international units compatible with the mission of the unit?

Community Service

1. Is the unit fulfilling opportunities to serve the community?
2. How does the unit's mission respond to the needs and priorities of the community?

Entrepreneurship

1. Is the unit seeking and pursuing appropriate opportunities for entrepreneurial activities?
2. Is the unit seeking a wide variety of activities in order to generate external funding appropriate to its mandate?

University Support

1. Is the unit receiving adequate resources from its Division and from the University at large?
2. Are its facilities adequate? Attention should be paid to space, equipment, computing, laboratory and library resources.
3. Is it adequately staffed?
4. Does the reporting structure ensure managerial efficiency and administrative effectiveness within the unit?

Plans, Goals, and Resource Allocation

1. Are the objectives of the unit appropriate to the mission of the University?
2. Is the unit trying to do too much?
3. What has the "value-added" of the unit been in the context of the overhead and other costs borne by the University on behalf of the unit?
4. How might the unit resources be redistributed to realize its goals and those of the University?
5. Should the unit continue in its present form?