

How to Get the Most out of your School Review Process

Preparation Stage:

1. Increase staff engagement with process by communicating the fact that review process is an opportunity to:
 - a. improve the culture of the school
 - b. to build case for appointment of new staff (both academic and professional)
 - c. promote ongoing and future initiatives to the senate committee and senior executives
 - d. gain further traction on existing projects
 - e. identify areas for improvement
 - f. improve and streamline processes
 - g. build levels of staff engagement. This process allows a very co-ordinated and visible understanding and overview of the School and its operations
 - h. build cross unit co-operation and relationships
 - i. improve leadership in all disciplines
 - j. manage academic workloads
 - k. consider funding base
2. Promote the fact that Review Process is judged nationally to be gold standard of tertiary review
3. Speak to other School Managers about how they conducted their reviews
4. Look at terms of reference
5. Include a strategic plan. Try and ensure strategic plan is in alignment with University vision and values
6. Give yourself plenty of time to complete review (8 – 12 months). Tailor timeline to that set by Academic Board
7. Establish a REALISTIC time frame
8. Establish who is going to drive the review
9. Establish who is responsible for what chapter
10. Look at previous submissions to determine content and structure of chapters
11. Engage services of skilled editor/ type setter. Regularly check their progress.
12. Worry more about the content than the presentation
13. Try not to be defensive in tone
14. Make choices early on about what type of data should be included in report
15. Don't whitewash data, the committee will spot it straight away! It needs to be verifiable.
16. Use official data sets to benchmark results. Don't reinvent the wheel.
17. Highlight what is unique about your school not what is common across all schools
18. Keep it short (50 – 90 pages)
19. Include colour photos
20. Ensure all tables are in same format
21. Spend one third looking back, two thirds looking forward.

22. Pick out relevant data from previous **three** years
23. Develop your relationship with the head of school to ensure output is aligned with their vision
24. Delegate, delegate, delegate....
25. Have regular communication sessions with staff to ensure everyone is supportive of process and understands the benefit for them. Be positive about the process otherwise staff will see it as an addition to their workload rather than an opportunity to promote their school and shine the spotlight on their work.
26. Be mindful that staff apathy or cynicism may obstruct process
27. The commendations are often very healing for staff and enable them to feel proud of their School resulting in higher levels of staff engagement.

Six weeks after Submission

1. Brief staff for interviews. Go through the type of questions they may be asked. Staff need to be honest, they will not be asked things they do not already know.
2. Develop 5 key messages you want staff to convey during interview process
 - a. "this is our challenge"
 - b. "this is what makes us unique"
 - c. "this is where we excel"
 - d. "this is our vision"
 - e. "this is why we need support for what we are doing"