



REPORT TEMPLATE: GUIDANCE

Introduction

- 1 It is the responsibility of report authors to ensure that all reports are drafted using the current template. Use of the template is mandatory for all reports to boards and committees (both at University and at Faculty level); reports which do not use the template will not normally be accepted.
- 2 The template includes a coversheet, which requests specific information, and an outline structure for the main body of the report. The template serves a number of purposes:
 - (a) providing a useful source of summary information for committee members;
 - (b) identifying key areas, such as the vision and values and risk management, for report authors to consider;
 - (c) enabling the university to manage information more effectively;
 - (d) complying with the university's legal obligations under the Freedom of Information Act;
 - (e) meeting good practice standards in governance.
- 3 The template, and an example of a completed coversheet, can be downloaded from the 'Resources' section of the Governance Services website at:

<http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/metoffice/gov/index.htm>
- 4 The notes below correspond to the sections of the template and provide guidance on its use. If you have any questions or require any assistance, please contact Governance Services on 0113 812 7542.

Report Coversheet

- 5 All sections are to be completed by the report author, except where otherwise indicated.

Report / committee information

6 *Paper Number*

The Paper Number will be inserted by the Secretary to the Board / Committee.

7 *Open / Confidential*

The Secretary will indicate whether the report is to be open to the public or confidential.

8 *Parent Body*

The parent body is that to which a board or committee reports directly. For example:

- (a) Board of Governors is the parent body of Estates Committee;
- (b) Academic Board is the parent body of Academic Committee;
- (c) Academic Committee is the parent body of Research Sub-Committee;
- (d) Academic Board is the parent body of Faculty Boards;
- (e) Faculty Boards are the parent body of Faculty Academic Committees.

9 *Report Title*

This should normally correspond to the item as it appears on the agenda for the meeting.

Report summary

10 *Purpose*

A report will normally be:

- (a) For information;
- (b) For discussion; or
- (c) For decision.

11 Summary

The summary should enable members of the board / committee to understand the purpose of the paper and the main issues raised in it. Whilst remaining brief, the summary must provide meaningful information about the content of the report.

12 Vision and Values

The Vision and Values is the University's primary statement of mission and strategy. Reports are expected to be accompanied by a short statement explaining how they (or matters to which they refer) are aligned to it and support its achievement.

13 Resourcing

Many reports will carry an immediate resource implication i.e. a cost associated with the matters proposed / discussed in the report. This should be summarized in order to assist members in reaching their decision.

If the report carries no immediate resource implications – for example, because it simply provides an update on existing activities – please indicate this.

14 Risks

Many reports will carry risks arising from the matters proposed / discussed in the report. Such risks, together with any mitigating factors / actions, should be summarized to assist members in reaching their decision.

Where a particular course of action is proposed / recommended, there are likely to be risks associated both with pursuing it and with not pursuing it. Both angles should be covered.

If the report carries no immediate risks – for example, because it raises minor matters for information / discussion and does not require a decision – please indicate this.

15 Recommendations

Please identify any formal recommendations which the board / committee is asked to consider. If the report is for information, the recommendation is likely to be that the board / committee note the report. This section should normally replicate the recommendations contained in the main body of the report [see below, paragraph 25 (c)].

16 Appendices

Please list and give details of any appendices accompanying the report; e.g.:

- (a) Appendix 1: Income and Expenditure Account
- (b) Appendix 2: Balance Sheet
- (c) Appendix 3: Cashflow Statement

Author

- 17 The author's contact details are requested in case members of the board / committee have any questions about the contents of the report.

Approval information

18 Approved by

Members of Senior Management Team are normally responsible for approving papers for University committees. They may delegate this responsibility to appropriate members of staff as they see fit. The name of the person who has approved the paper should be recorded.

19 Executive Group date

All papers which are intended for Board of Governors, its committees, or Academic Board and which commit the University to strategy, policy, or expenditure must first be submitted to the Executive Group for review. The Executive Group normally meets weekly on a Monday and comprises the Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar and Secretary, the Director of Finance and Planning, the Director of Human Resources, and the Director of Student-Centred Change Management. Please record the date on which the report was reviewed by the Executive Group, if applicable.

Freedom of Information

20 Status

Please indicate whether you intend a paper to be 'Open' or 'Confidential'. The university, as a publicly-funded institution, is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, meaning that all papers will be made publicly available unless marked confidential. It is anticipated that the vast majority of papers will **not** be confidential.

21 Exemption

If you intend a paper to be confidential, please indicate the relevant exemption under the Freedom of Information legislation. In the university context, most exemptions are likely to fall into the following categories: section 22 (information intended for future publication), section 40 (Personal Information), or section 43 (commercial interest). Guidance is available from the Information Commissioner [online](#). Governance Services will advise.

22 Exemption period

If you intend a paper to be confidential, please indicate the period of time for which you intend it to remain so. This might be until a particular date, for a specified period of time, or indefinitely. Governance Services will advise.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 23 The University is legally required to ensure that all policies have been subject to an equality impact assessment. The Board of Governors will not normally approve policies unless such an assessment has been carried out. The Equality and Diversity Unit will assist in carrying it out. Where an equality impact assessment has been carried out, please summarize the main findings to assist members in reaching their decision.

Main Body of Report

Structure

- 24 The main body of the report should follow on directly from the coversheet. The title of the report should be repeated and should correspond to that given on the coversheet and on the agenda for the meeting.
- 25 As an indication, it is anticipated that the report should be structured into the following sections:
- (a) Introduction: covering the purpose and scope of the report and the background and context to it.
 - (b) Body of report: an explanation of the matter(s) which the report addresses, including any evidence and supporting arguments. This section may be broken down into a number of sections, as required.
 - (c) Conclusions / recommendations: the main conclusions arising from the report and any recommended action which the board / committee is asked to consider.

- (d) References / further information: a list of references used / cited and sources of further information which may be of use to committee members.
- (e) Appendices: Authors should attach each appendix ensuring it is appropriately labelled and sequenced ensuring the same for any annexes.

26 In authoring reports, the emphasis should be on providing comprehensive but concise information to assist members of the board / committee. Insufficient or inappropriate information may prevent members from reaching a decision; equally, the provision of too much information, even if it is of a high quality, is likely to impair effective decision-making.

Formatting

- 27 The standard font for reports, is Calibri 12pt. Headings and sub-headings will be printed in Calibri Bold, 12 – 14 pt.
- 28 Each paragraph of a report should be numbered sequentially from the start to the end of the report. Sections should not be numbered to preserve a simple sequence of numbers (i.e.: 1, 2, 3 ... instead of 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 etc.).
- 29 Sub-paragraphs should be indented and numbered (a), (b), (c) etc. The level below should be further indented and numbered (i), (ii), (iii), etc.