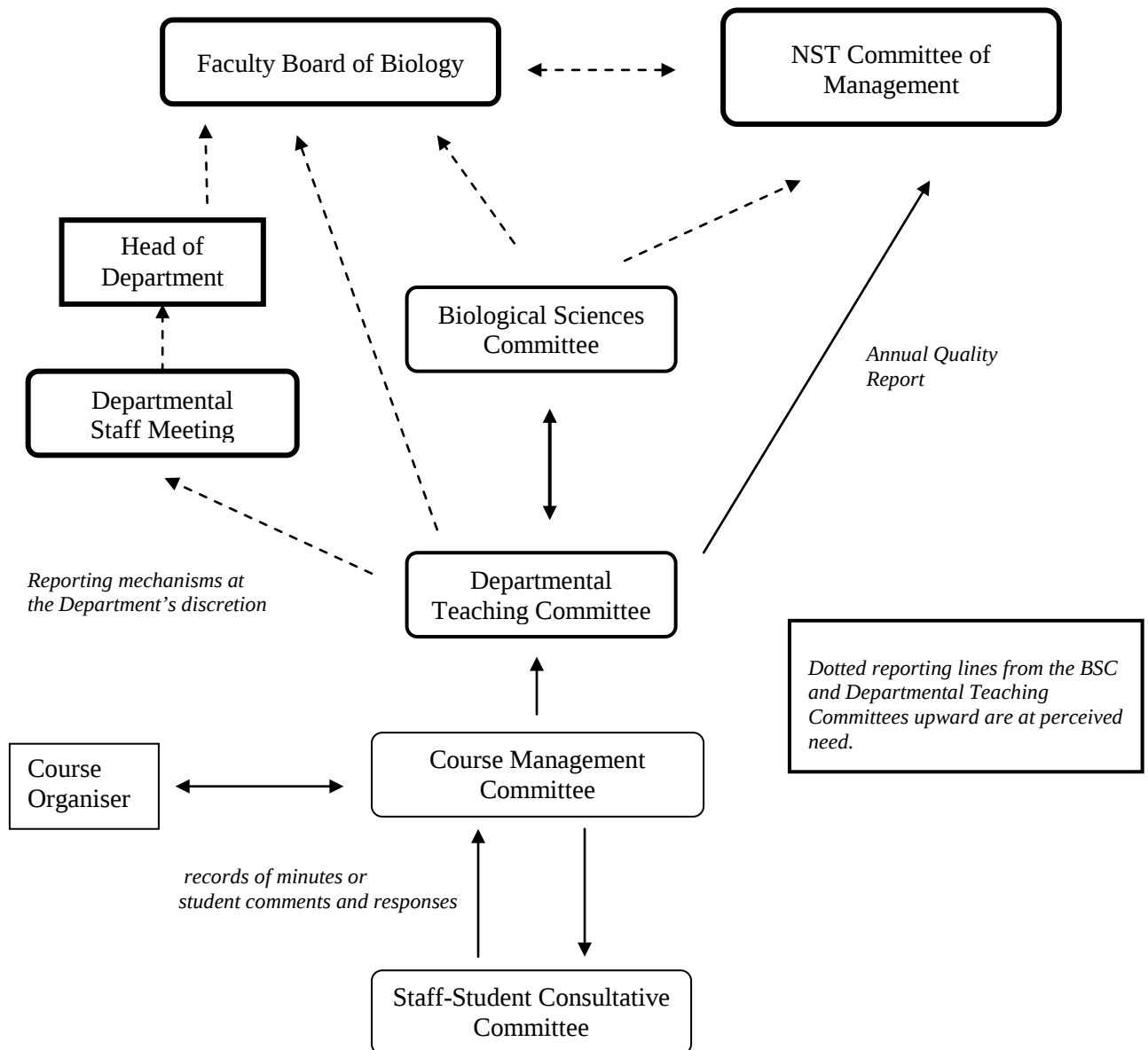


REPORTING LINES FOR BIOLOGICAL COURSES IN THE NATURAL SCIENCES TRIPOS



For some courses (either Departmentally-owned or interdepartmental), the functions of the bodies outlined above may be served by fewer committees *e.g.*

1. Departments may choose to not have a “Departmental Teaching Committee”, where teaching issues are routinely addressed at full staff meetings.
2. Departments may choose not to have separate “Course Management Committees” for each of the courses run by the Department, but a single “Departmental Teaching Committee”, which considers all Departmental teaching courses together. If this model is adopted, care must be taken to ensure there is appropriate student representation.
3. Courses may choose not to have a separate “Course Management Committee” and “Staff-Student Consultative Committee”, where students are present for all matters discussed. (A single “Course Management Committee” may alternatively have unreserved and reserved business.)

The role of the Biological Sciences Committee

The Biological Sciences Committee's remit includes reviewing the quality, delivery and assessment of teaching in the NST, reviewing the balance and spread of teaching in biology in the NST and making recommendations to the Faculty Board. Its membership includes representatives from each of the Departments of the Faculty, who are responsible for ensuring that there are appropriate levels of communication between the BSC and their Department.

The Faculty Board have agreed that each interdepartmental course should have a "home" department which will be responsible for providing a base and administrative support, and that this will in most cases be the department of the Course Organiser.

For all courses, the Biological Sciences Committee should receive information and reports on the quality and delivery of learning and teaching as necessary from the Departmental representative of the Department responsible for the current management of the course (the "home" Department). The representatives are responsible for ensuring that matters which require input at the Faculty Board level (including but not limited to: major changes to courses and examinations, the impact of other NST courses on teaching in the Department and any difficulties with delivery of the course including resourcing difficulties).

Interdepartmental courses should also report to the Teaching Committees of those departments involved in delivery of the course. This might be done informally through the individuals lecturing on the course, or more formally through the Minutes of Course Management Committee meetings.

The Education Section of the General Board will expect to receive a response to the External Examiner's report from the Head of the "home" Department.

The constitution and role of interdepartmental Course Management Committees

Interdepartmental Course Management Committees should include representatives from each Department contributing to the course and ordinarily would consist of all lecturers on the current year of the course. If a separate Staff-Student Consultative Committee is not convened, the Course Management Committee should include a student representative, ideally elected by the students taking the course. Each Committee should also include the following officers, appointed by the members of the Committee:

a Chairman, whose responsibilities include:

- convening the meetings of the Course Management Committee at suitable intervals (usually termly);
- ensuring that staff and student feedback are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner;
- liaising with the Head of the "home" department to ensure that the reports of Senior and External Examiners are considered by the Course Management Committee and that a response is made to the Examiners and copied to the Faculty office and Education Section of the General Board;
- for interdepartmental courses, liaising with Heads of Departments and the Faculty Office to ensure that bodies of Examiners are appropriate;
- submitting an annual report to the Biological Sciences Committee;
- ensuring that appropriate arrangements are made for reporting to the Teaching or Staff Committees of the Departments involved in delivering the course and hence to the Heads of those Departments involved in teaching on the course;
- ensuring, through the Heads of those Departments involved, that the course is adequately funded and that appropriate lecturing staff and administrative support are available.

a Course Organiser, whose responsibilities include:

- acting as a point of contact for students currently on the course, or intending to take the course in future years;
- ensuring that the timetable of lectures and other teaching provision for the current academic year is proceeding as planned;
- ensuring that all lectures and other teaching provisions are provided by suitably qualified persons;
- ensuring that the published information for the course (including the course handbook and webpages) is accurate and up-to-date;
- compiling a timetable for lectures and other teaching provision for the next academic year.

a Secretary, whose responsibilities include

- keeping records of meetings;
- liaising with the Secretaries of the Biological Sciences Committee, Faculty Board of Biology and NST Committees as appropriate, for the communication of: material for publicising the courses (including the prospectus and Lecture List), proposed Form and Conduct Notices and changes to regulations;
- informing the Faculty office of the names of persons appointed to act as Chairman, Course Organiser and Secretary for the current and next academic years.

A single person may perform the roles of more than one officer (*i.e.* they may act as Chairman *and* Course Organiser, or Course Organiser *and* Secretary, or even all three). Course Management Committees should give some consideration to ensuring there is continuity of office; if rotas for the posts are drawn up, these should be communicated to the Faculty office. If there is to be a change of officer, it is recommended that there is a clearly defined handover date so that it is clear who is responsible for the course at all times.