



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Where leaders learn*

## **INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND REVIEW FRAMEWORK**

*Approved by Council, June 2007*

*Revised May 2008, November 2010, November 2011, September 2021*

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to provide a conceptual framework for planning and review at Rhodes University. It is intended to describe the institution's approach to accountability, improvement and resource allocation and align internal processes with the University's overall vision and goals.

The planning and review framework of the University is designed to:

- To allow for the provision of resources for the achievement of the institutional goals as set out in the Institutional Development Plan (IDP);
- Ensure the fair, appropriate and sustainable allocation of resources;
- Record achievements and best practices and monitor the implementation of recommendations by looking backwards;
- Promote effective, well-coordinated planning and budgeting by looking forward;
- Ensure that the University discharges its responsibilities in a timely and proper manner
- Align internal processes with institutional goals and external accountabilities, as well as institutionalising a quality culture

### **2. Institutional Vision and Mission**

#### **Vision**

Rhodes University's vision is to be an outstanding internationally-respected academic institution which proudly affirms its African identity and which is committed to democratic ideals, academic freedom, rigorous scholarship, sound moral values and social responsibility.

#### **Mission**

In pursuit of its vision, the University will strive to produce outstanding graduates who are innovative, analytical, articulate, balanced and adaptable, with a life-long love of learning; and to strive, through teaching, research and community service, to contribute to the advancement of international scholarship and the development of the Eastern Cape and Southern Africa.

Accordingly, the University undertakes

- to develop shared values that embrace basic human and civil rights;
- to acknowledge and be sensitive to the problems created by the legacy of apartheid, to reject all forms of unfair discrimination and to ensure that appropriate corrective measures are employed to redress past imbalances;
- to create a research-based teaching and learning environment that will encourage students to reach their full potential, that is supportive of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and that will produce critical, capable and skilled graduates who can adapt to changing environments;
- to promote excellence and innovation in teaching and learning by providing staff and students with access to relevant academic development programmes;

- to provide an attractive, safe and well-equipped environment that is conducive to good scholarship and collegiality;
- to provide a safe and nurturing student support system as well as a diverse array of residential, sporting, cultural and leadership opportunities that will foster the all-round development of our students, the university and the region as a whole;
- to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre and to provide development programmes for staff at all levels;
- to promote excellence in research and other creative endeavours;
- to play an active role in promoting inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration within the Eastern Cape Province;
- where appropriate, to assist in the development of the Eastern Cape Province by making available the university's expertise, resources and facilities;
- to play a leading role in establishing a culture of environmental concern by actively pursuing a policy of environmental best practice;
- to strive for excellence and to promote quality assurance in all its activities.

### **3. Planning and Review Principles**

Rhodes University accepts it has statutory accountability to the national Department of Higher Education & Training to report annually on its institutional plans and performance, and the Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education to ensure that an appropriate quality management system is in place. The University accepts it also has accountability responsibilities to students, staff, parents, funders and partners. In meeting these obligations, the following principles apply:

- Planning and review processes must allow the University to anticipate and respond to the rapidly changing environment in which it operates.
- Planning and review processes should provide opportunities for the participation of students, academic and general staff and the broader community.
- Planning and review outcomes must be sharp, focused and concise.
- High standards in teaching and learning, research and scholarship are expected.
- The University's reputation and the value of its qualifications must be maintained and enhanced.
- Fairness, transparency and accountability in academic and administrative policies and procedures should be practiced.
- A commitment to academic freedom, intellectual vigour and the highest ethical standards is expected.
- Each member of the University community should clearly understand the rights, responsibilities and obligations associated with their role/s.
- Each member of the University community is expected to accept shared responsibility for planning and quality assurance.
- Accurate and appropriate information should be available from a centralised database in a timely and predictable form.
- Formal reporting requirements should be coordinated to avoid duplication and overlap.
- Build institutional capacity to be able to nurture the internal quality assurance system.
- Provide an effective monitoring and reporting system to ensure that resources are being utilised efficiently.
- Review the strategic purpose of Support Divisions in relation to the vision and mission of the University, with particular reference to the Division's role in achieving the University's size and shape goals.
- Planning and reviewing will allow the institution to consider the extent to which departments/divisions/units have met their goals, adequate allocation of resources, and consideration for equity profile and staff development.

Faculties and units develop their own mission, goals and strategies within the framework of the University's institutional goals and values. Institutional consideration and alignment of such activities take place during the review process.

#### **4. Planning, Resource Allocation and Quality Management**

The primary and most important planning focus at Rhodes University is on **academic planning**, the contention being that if the academic plan is appropriate and accepted by the University community, then all other planning and resource allocation activities will logically flow from there. **Support services** play a key role in providing support to the institution's main business, which is teaching, research, community engagement, and the production of well-rounded graduates who can make a valuable contribution to society.

**Institutional 'imbizos'**, including academic, administrative, Council, Union and student representatives, are held approximately every two years to review the University's strategic direction and goals and reflect on external challenges and opportunities.

Planning, resource allocation and quality management at the University are integrated at an institutional level, primarily through regular **reviews** of academic departments, research institutes, and support services. Institutional reviews are used as an opportunity for staff, students and other members of the University community to reflect on the past and participate in planning the University's future.

The **Institutional Planning Committee (IPC)** is the main operational committee responsible for planning and resource allocation. It is a joint committee of Senate and Council. It is tasked with ensuring the most effective and efficient use of staff resources, physical facilities and operational funding, thereby ensuring a 'fit' between the institutional mission and the resources available. Three sub-committees focus on the primary responsibilities of the IPC:

- Size and shape, including academic programmes
- Infrastructure planning
- Development fundraising

In addition, the IPC develops and monitors the **Institutional Development Plan (IDP)**, which aims to provide a roadmap for student enrolment planning, financial, physical and human resource planning. The IDP is based on the outcomes of, inter alia, institutional reviews, imbizos, external conditions, enrolment and departmental planning exercises and staffing committee deliberations.

Note: Resource allocations will continue to be considered as part of the institutional budgeting process. Capital equipment, IT needs, space and other physical resource recommendations should be considered by the relevant committee and the committee's recommendation will be submitted to the budget process in due course.

**Composition of the Institutional Planning Committee:**

| <b>Full Membership (16)</b>   | <b>In Attendance (18)</b>   |
|---|---|
| Vice-Chancellor (Chair)   | Registrar   |
| Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs  | Chief Financial Officer   |
| Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation   | Director: Communications & Advancement                                    |
| 6 Deans of the Faculties*   | Director: Community Engagement  |
| Deputy Dean of Humanities*  | Director: Information & Technology Services                               |
| 2 Council representatives   | Director: Equity & Institutional Culture                                  |
| 2 Senate representatives*   | Director: Finance   |
| 2 SRC representatives (one of whom should represent postgraduate students)                  | Director: Student Affairs   |
|   | Director: Human Resources   |
|   | Director: International Office  |
|   | Director: Institutional Research, Planning, and Quality Promotion (IRPQP) |
|   | Director: Library Services  |
|   | Director: Research Office   |
|   | Director: Office of the Vice-Chancellor                                   |
|   | HoD: CHERTL   |
|   | NTEU representative   |
|   | NEHAWU representative   |
| <b>*Academic (the IPC operates on a principle of having a majority of academic members)</b> | <b>'In attendance' means full participation, excluding voting rights.</b> |

Operationally, an **Academic Leadership Forum** (ALF) meets once a month and comprises the VC, DVC's, Faculty Deans, and Registrars to discuss issues of common concern. A **Senior Administration Forum** (SAM) meets once a month and comprises the VC, DVC's, Registrar, and Directors of Support Services to discuss issues of common concern. Joint one-day meetings of these two groups are held at the beginning, middle and end of each year to discuss strategic issues, establish priorities, report on progress and review the achievement of IDP goals.

### **5. Provision of Appropriate Data**

A **Digest of Statistics** is published annually, which provides statistical information with particular reference to student and staff demographics, administrative and academic departments, university finances, national benchmarks and progress made towards enrolment planning targets. The information is intended to be used as an aid by those responsible for planning and management, and strategic decisions are based on informed qualitative judgements rather than simply quantitative data. Any additional data required is provided as necessary by the Information and Technology Services Division, working closely with Institutional Research, Planning & Quality Promotion Division. In addition, a **'dashboard of performance indicators'** is provided bi-annually to Council members to enable them to monitor and evaluate progress made in achieving institutional goals and benchmark Rhodes University within the national higher education context.

### **6. The Review Process**

Reviews of academic departments, support services and research institutes are held as appropriate but generally in 3 to 6-year cycles. Reviews can be institution-wide, including for instance, all academic departments or support services, or they can be ad hoc, responding to circumstances specific to a particular unit. The review model normally used is the following:

- i. A proposal is made to the Institutional Planning Committee that a review of a unit or group of units should be conducted.

- ii. The review exercise is coordinated by the Institutional Research, Planning & Quality Promotion Division in the case of academic departments, and the Human Resources Division is responsible for overseeing the review of the support services.
- iii. Terms of reference are developed according to a 'terms of reference template', which may be adapted according to the particular circumstances of the unit.
- iv. Relevant statistical data is provided according to the terms of reference.
- v. A self-evaluation or method of review deemed appropriate for a unit of review, is conducted and a report is produced by the unit/s. Depending on the context, a review can also be conducted without an initial self-evaluation report from the unit of review.
- vi. Where a self-evaluation report is required/necessary, this should include initial recommendations, as proposed by the unit of review, for consideration by the review panel. The self-evaluation report must comment on the following:
  - **Staff profile** in terms of race & gender, years of experience and service where applicable;
  - **Skills needed** to be effective and efficient compared to the existing skills available. Where there is a gap between skills needed and those available, the implications for staff development need to be assessed;
  - For support services, the **management of the Division** inter alia: style of management, shared values of the Division, methods of managing (delegating, supporting, developing, managing performance) of staff, ensuring adherence to policy, communication within the Division, extent and nature of disciplinary action within the Division, management of change;
  - **Comment on the resources** (staff, equipment, time) needed to realize the strategy of the unit;
  - An analysis of **barriers** (internal and external) to maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of the unit being reviewed.
- vii. Where necessary, the University community is informed that a review is taking place, and comments or requests to be interviewed as part of the review process are invited (the unit's self-evaluation report will be made available on request to those who wish to make a submission).
- viii. A review panel of approximately 3-4 suitable expertise (decided upon by the VC, after consultation with the Deans (in case of academic departments) and the Director, Institutional Research, Planning & Quality Promotion, and which could include an external advisor if necessary), meets to consider the self-evaluation report and recommendations, and conduct relevant interviews.
- ix. A draft report is produced by the Chair of the review panel (or the designated secretariat) and once approved by the review panel, is sent to the Head of the unit being reviewed as well as the line manager/management board as appropriate for comment. The panel may wish to revise its recommendations after considering the input from the unit being reviewed.
- x. A final review report is then submitted to the Institutional Planning Committee, accompanied by any written responses from the Head of the unit concerned as well as the line manager/management board (if these comments have not already been incorporated into the panel's report), and the IPC then submits its recommendations to Senate and Council.
- xi. Should the final review report contain resource implications, it will also be sent to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration.
- xii. Once a review report has been approved by Council, relevant recommendations will be included in the next budget cycle.
- xiii. University-approved review reports will be available on the intranet to all members of the University community.

Faculties, Departments and Support Services are entitled to undertake their own reviews. However, any recommendations arising from such reviews, which impact the University or the unit of review, must be submitted to the Institutional Planning Committee for consideration.

## **7. Implementation**

Institutional plans and supporting operational plans are implemented through various structures such as faculties, schools, departments, centres, the committee system, and support services. Many of these planning activities will cut across organisational boundaries and may require new ways of thinking and doing.

Recommendations arising from review exercises must:

- assign responsibility for implementation to individuals or institutional committees (where accountability lies with more than one person, it is expected that the tasks will be accomplished in a collegial manner);
- be concise, realistic and implementable;
- aim to produce outcomes that can be evaluated through demonstrable measures of achievement;
- take into account resources available and indicate resources required to achieve the desired outcomes;
- have the support and commitment of the University community and other affected groups;
- indicate how implementation will be monitored.

## **8. Issues/Functions Based Plans**

There are several areas where the University will develop specific plans relating to a particular function or issue. These University-wide plans may expand on issues already identified in the institutional/academic plan, or they may focus on activities or functions that need to be coordinated across the University, for example:

- Student enrolments/ size and shape
- New academic initiatives
- Research Equity
- Staff remuneration
- Physical planning
- Etc.

These plans must arise out of and be solidly grounded in the University's institutional goals and values. All programmes and projects seeking University and/or donor funding must be accompanied by explicit implementation plans that indicate responsible persons, reporting dates, time frames and monitoring mechanisms to ensure effective spending of budgets and timely reporting. Templates are available for this purpose.

## **9. University Budget Process**

The University Budget gives practical expression to the overall planning decisions of the University. The vision and values of the University and the strategies necessary to achieve these are articulated in the priorities of the resource allocations. The effective use of scarce resources necessitates hard decision-making and prioritising. The University operates on a centralised, zero-based, balanced budget basis and cross-subsidisation according to agreed aims and principles is an integral part of the budgeting process.

The University's budget process gets underway in the second half of the year with the budget strategy meeting to consider budget principles. The budget strategy meetings are attended by

executive management, senior academic leaders, and senior management of the University. Subsequent meetings are attended by the broader representation of various constituencies including staff unions, student representatives, support staff, working groups and members of the Finance Division to consider budget proposals. After approximately 3 meetings and wider discussions with affected applicants, recommendations regarding resource allocations are made to Council which considers the proposals and finalises the budget in December each year for the following year.

## **10. Institutional Audits, Programme Reviews and Quality Enhancement**

All South African higher education institutions are required to undergo regular external audits and programme reviews - which are undertaken according to a national framework and criteria - by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education. In order to find efficiencies and avoid duplication, planning and review processes are combined wherever possible so that planning processes simultaneously collect and analyse information needed to facilitate quality assurance and enhancement.

External audits and programme reviews are coordinated by the Institutional Research, Planning and Quality Promotion Division, in collaboration with the Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL) in compliance with our Quality Assurance Framework.

The DVC: Academic and Student Affairs is responsible for academic quality strategies. The Rhodes University Teaching and Learning Committee and the Academic Programme Curriculum Quality Committee oversee teaching and learning enhancement and curriculum development.

## **11. Planning and Review Units**

Three main types of units for planning and review are identified:

1. Academic departments and/or faculties
2. Research institutes/centres
3. Support services

Different planning and review methodologies may apply to different types of units. It is recognised that some units are engaged in both academic activities and support services, such as CHERTL, and appropriate methodologies should be used to reflect this. Guidelines are available for the generic formulation of terms of reference (Appendix A).

### **11.1. Academic Departments**

Accounting

Afrikaans and Netherlandic Studies

African Languages

Anthropology

Biochemistry, Microbiology

Biotechnology Innovation Centre

Botany

Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL)

Chemistry

Chinese Studies

Classical Studies

Computer Science

Drama

Economics & Economic History

Linguistics and Applied Language Studies  
Environmental Science  
Extended Studies Unit  
Fine Art  
French  
Geography  
Geology  
German  
History  
Human Kinetics & Ergonomics  
Ichthyology & Fisheries Science  
Information Systems  
Journalism & Media Studies (School)  
Law (Faculty)  
Literary Studies in English  
Management  
Mathematics (Pure & Applied)  
Modern Fiction  
Music and Musicology  
Pharmacy (Faculty)  
Philosophy  
Physics  
Political and International Studies  
Primary and Early Childhood Education  
Psychology and Electronics  
Rhodes Business School  
Secondary and Post-School Education  
School of Languages and Linguistics  
Sociology  
Statistics  
Zoology & Entomology

#### 11.2. Research Institutes and related entities

Allan Gray Centre for Leadership Ethics (AGCLE)  
Biomedical Biotechnology Research Unit (BioBRU)  
Biotechnology Innovation Centre (BIC)  
Centre for Biological Control  
Centre for Chemico- and Biomedical Research  
Centre for Postgraduate Studies  
Centre for Social Accountability (CSA – previously PSAM)  
Centre for Social Development (CSD)  
Confucius Institute  
Dictionary Unit for South African English (DSAE)  
Environmental Learning Research Centre (ELRC)  
First Physical Theatre Company  
Institute for Environmental Biotechnology Rhodes University  
Institute for the Study of the Englishes of Africa (ISEA)  
Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER)  
Institute for Water Research (IWR)  
International Library of African Music (ILAM)  
Neil Aggett Labour Studies Unit (NALSU)  
Postgraduate Research in Iron and Manganese Ore Resources  
Research Unit in Bioinformatics

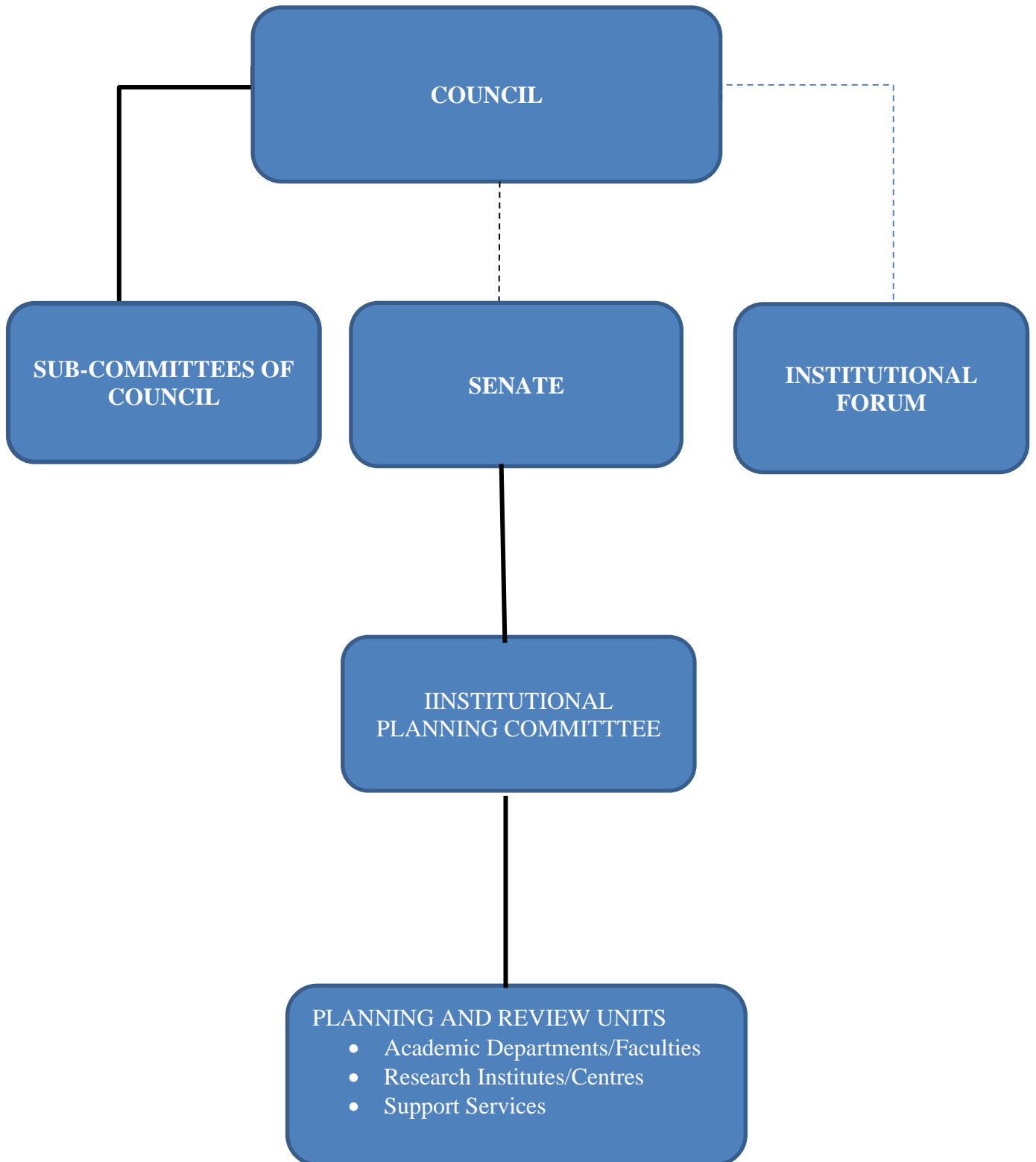


Rhodes University Law Clinic  
Rhodes University Mathematics Education Project  
Sol Plaatje Media Leadership Institute, Journalism  
Southern Oceans Group (SOG)  
The South African Reserve Bank Centre for Economics Journalism  
Unit of Zimbabwean Studies in the Department of Sociology

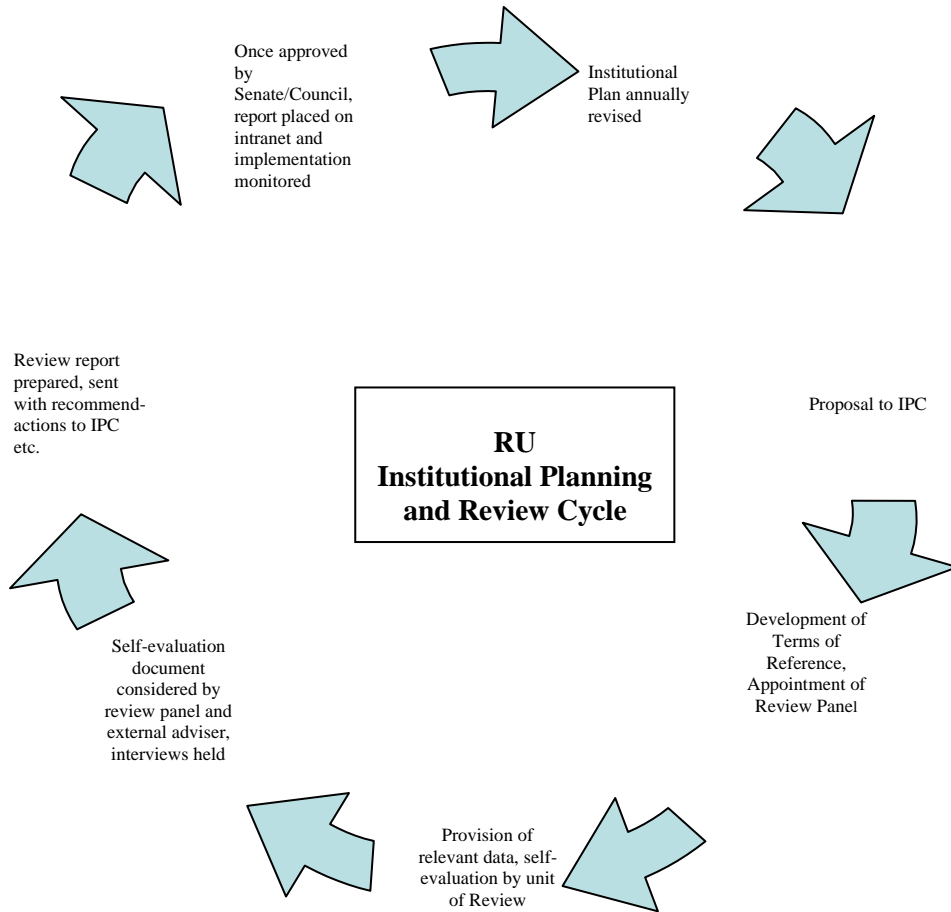
11.3. Support Services/Divisions (14)

Community Engagement  
Communications & Advancement  
Division of Students Affairs  
Equity and Institutional Culture  
Finance  
Human Resources Division  
Information and Technology Services  
Infrastructure and Operations  
International Office  
Institutional Research, Planning and Quality Promotion  
Library Services  
Registrar's (incl. Admissions and Academic Administration)  
Research Office

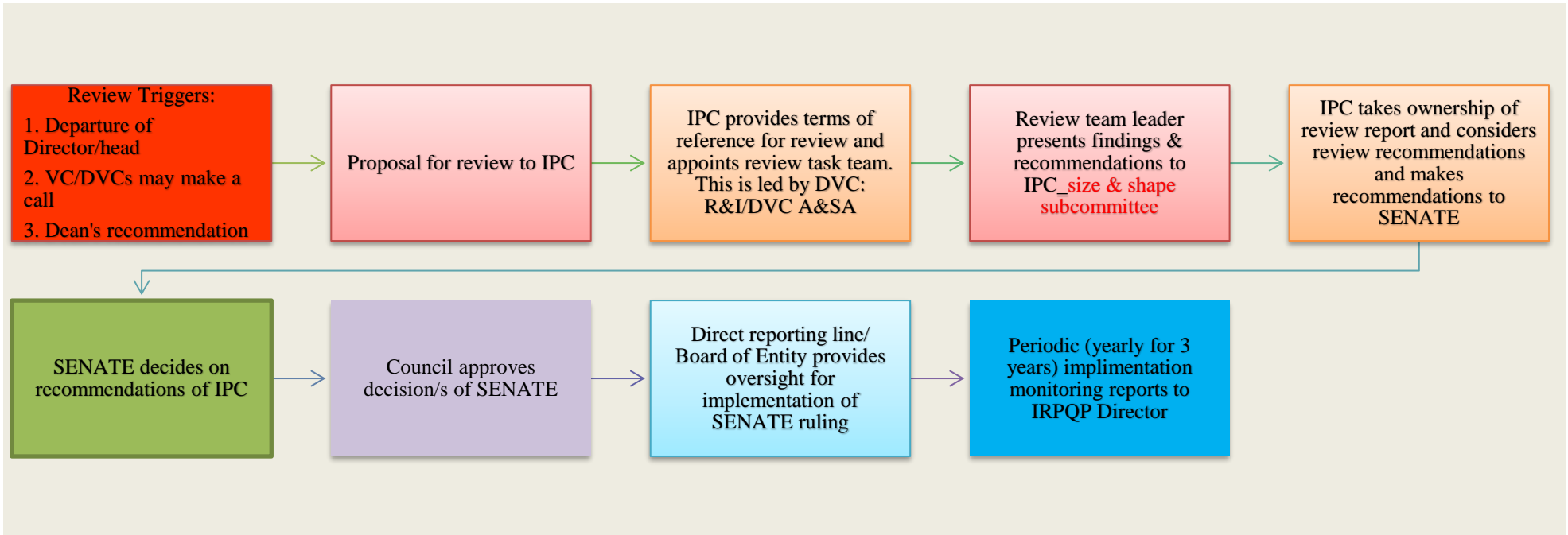
**12. Diagrammatic Representation of Planning and Review Reporting Structures at Rhodes University**



### 13. Rhodes University Institutional Planning and Review Cycle



## 14. Process Flowchart for the Review of Research Entities



**APPENDIX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE  
TEMPLATE**



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa*

**DATE: XXX**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE (UNIT OF REVIEW)**  
*(Academic Departments/Research Entities/Support Services)*

*Note: This document should be read in conjunction with the Rhodes University Institutional Planning and Review Framework.*

**INTRODUCTION**

**BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

**OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW**

**SCOPE OF THE REVIEW**

**PROPOSED METHODOLOGY**

**APPENDICES**

APPENDIX B: REVIEW REPORT TEMPLATE

# REVIEW OF <name of entity>

<day> <month>, <year>

## Acronyms

<acronym>      <full form>

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**Appendix A – Terms of Reference**

**Appendix B – Letter to Unions**

**Appendix C – <entity name> Contribution Model**

**Appendix D – Letter to Members of Staff of <name of entity>**

