

Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies

Academic Administration Handbook



A RECOGNISED INDEPENDENT CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies
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Contents

Remits and roles	1
The Academic Director	1
The Academic Administrator	1
Academic Planning Committee.....	1
Academic Council	2
Academic administration activities.....	2
Reports	2
Developing a programme of academic activities.....	2
Finalising dates	3
Publicising events	3
Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship	4
Bursaries.....	4
Research projects and events.....	4
Schedule of academic administration activities	5

Remits and roles

The Academic Director

The Academic Director directs the academic activities of the OCHS. He or she chairs the Academic Planning Committee and the Academic Council, and works with the Director to ensure the smooth functioning of these bodies.

The Academic Administrator

The Academic Administrator works with the Academic Director and the Director to ensure the smooth administration of all academic committees, programmes, bursaries, and research projects at the OCHS. He or she reports to the Director and to the Board of Governors. The Academic Administrator also serves as secretary to the Academic Planning Committee and the Academic Council.

Duties include:

- Scheduling, minuting, reporting, and overseeing execution of the tasks of the Academic Planning Committee;
- Minuting Academic Council meetings;
- Reporting on academic development to the Academic Council, Board of Governors, Benefactors, and other groups as required;
- Ensuring the timely and correct compilation and advertising of the academic events programme for each term;
- Overseeing contact, confirmation, and correct communications with Shivdasani Fellows for each term;
- Advertising bursaries to students and overseeing the selection and award process;
- Overseeing development of research projects, and in some cases personally developing and fundraising for them.

For guidance, a schedule of the Academic Administrator's activities throughout the year can be found at the end of the handbook.

Academic Planning Committee

The Academic Planning Committee is an executive body led by the Academic Director, which considers and directs all academic matters. It is chaired by the Academic Director and consists of the Academic Director, Director, Academic Administrator (as Secretary of the Committee), Librarian, and senior members of the Centre. Graduate students may also be invited to attend to provide input and suggestions.

The Academic Planning Committee reports to the Board of Governors and the Academic Council. It meets weekly during term, and whenever required outside of term. It may also meet for consultation with the Shivdasani Fellow once in every term. Its recommendations must be ratified by the Academic Director.

Its remit primarily involves:

- Devising the termly schedule of lectures and seminars;
- Developing symposia and conferences;
- Developing projects for publication and research;
- Reviewing and choosing candidates for the Shivdasani Fellowship;

- Developing vision and direction for the academic activities of the Centre.

The Academic Administrator is responsible for scheduling and advertising the meetings, writing and circulating agendas and minutes, and overseeing the completion of tasks appointed therein.

Academic Council

The Academic Council reviews annual reports on the academic progress and plans of the Centre, and gives feedback and advice. It is chaired by the Academic Director and consists of the Academic Administrator (as Secretary of the Council), representatives appointed by the Theology Faculty, Oriental Studies Faculty, South Asian Studies Sub-Faculty, and the Academic Planning Committee. It reports to the Board of Governors and Fellows.

The Academic Administrator, in conjunction with the Academic Director, is responsible for scheduling and advertising the meetings of the Academic Council, circulating the agenda, taking and circulating the minutes, and providing any further assistance to the Academic Administrator.

Academic administration activities

The Academic Administrator needs to be thorough, timely, and effective at allocating tasks and overseeing others in their tasks. A resource of templates, rolling files or reports, and useful information relating to the work of the Academic Administrator files can be found in the electronic folder 'Academic Administration' on the OCHS fileserver. These will be referred to below.

Reports

The Academic Administrator prepares a bi-annual report to the Board of Governors, and the annual report to the Academic Council in conjunction with the Academic Director. The Academic Administrator may also give reports to the Benefactors Committee and other groups at various points in the year.

The most recent academic administration report for the Academic Council can be found on the OCHS file-server at: O:\OCHS Academic Administrator\Templates\BOG & Academic Council\BOG Academic Admin Report.

Developing a programme of academic activities.

One of the main functions of the Academic Director in conjunction with the Academic Planning Committee is to develop the termly programme of lectures, seminars, and any other academic events such as symposia or conferences. The Academic Administrator oversees this whole process and ensures that it meets the relevant deadlines.

The Academic Planning Committee forms a list of possible speakers and events.

Once speakers are agreed, the Academic Administrator must note and oversee effective completion of these tasks:

- Invite and confirm speakers and dates;
- Obtain titles and a short summary of proposed events for publicising;
- Organise venues;
- Publicise these events in appropriate forums.

The Majewski Lecture

In recognition of charitable service to the Centre by Aleksander Majewski, these lectures are given once every term by a recognised scholar.

The Wahlstrom Lecture

Sponsored by Todd and Amanda Wahlstrom, long time supporters of the Centre, this is a yearly lecture given by a scholar in the field.

The Ford Lecture

This is given annually in honour of long-time supporter Alfred B. Ford, and is intended for high-profile speakers (not necessarily academics) to address issues of broad relevance to Hindu culture.

Shivdasani Seminars and Lectures

Each term the Shivdasani Fellow gives two seminars and two lectures related to their research on themes within the broad rubric of Hindu Studies. Texts of the lectures should be provided to the Centre for possible publication before the Fellow ends his or her residence.

Finalising dates

By week four of each term the Academic Administrator should confirm the programme for the succeeding term.

Publicising events

Notice of events must be sent to:

- The OCHS mailing list,
- Theology faculty,
- Oriental Studies faculty
- South Asian Studies faculty,
- Indian Institute Library,
- OU Gazette
- and where appropriate to the Anthropology, History, or Philosophy faculties.

Most of these can be done by email. The appropriate email or postal (as in the case of Oriental Studies and the Indian institute) addresses for these faculties change regularly and should be reconfirmed at the start of every academic year.

The Academic Administrator also oversees the preparation of leaflets advertising the academic events (in practice, this may be done by the Librarian or another member of staff), and at the beginning of every term ensures that they are made available in hard copy at the OCHS, by email to special targeted audiences for particular events, and ensures that they are put up in any further venues that are appropriate to those particular events.

Templates for leaflets and posters for academic events can be found at: O:\OCHS Academic Administrator\Templates\Lectures & Seminars\Lecture List

A list of the most recent contact information for the relevant faculties, institutions and mailing lists can be found at: O:\OCHS Academic Administrator\Templates\Lectures & Seminars\Faculty Contacts

Recent minutes and agendas for the Academic Planning Committee (where events are decided) can be found in: O:\OCHS Academic Administrator\Templates\Academic Planning Committee

Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship

The Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship provides opportunities for scholars who have shown outstanding achievement in their chosen field of study and who would benefit from a period of independent study at Oxford, to spend a term in residence at Oxford participating fully in the Centre's academic and social activities.

In conjunction with the Academic Director and Council, the Academic Administrator must particularly oversee the process of inviting and confirming Shivdasani Fellows, and liaising with the Academic Director where necessary. The appointment of the Shivdasani Fellow for the succeeding term should be confirmed by fourth week, and it is then the duty of the Academic Administrator to ensure that:

- Dates, titles, and summaries of talks are confirmed;
- The appointee receives the Visiting Scholars Handbook and a confirmation letter from the Academic Director;
- The Director is informed so that travel and accommodation can be arranged.

The Visiting Scholars Handbook can be found at: O:\OCHS Academic Administrator\Templates\Shivdasani Fellowships\Shivdasani Handbook.

A template for the confirmation letter from the Academic Director can be found at: O:\OCHS Academic Administrator\Templates\Shivdasani Fellowships\ Shivdasani Letter.

A template for advertising the Shivadasani Fellowship can be found at: O:\OCHS Academic Administrator\Templates\Shivdasani Fellowships\Shivdasani Advertisement.

Bursaries

The OCHS awards a number of bursaries to students. These are normally advertised in fourth week of Hilary term with a fortnight deadline, and awarded by the end of the Hilary term.

The Academic Administrator is responsible for:

- Confirming and compiling details of all bursaries (which may change annually);
- Advertising them to students;
- Overseeing the review of the applications and the award of the bursaries;
- Reporting on award of the bursaries to benefactors where necessary.

The bursaries offered in the academic year 2007–8 will be:

- The Jiva Gosvami Scholarship for £1000
- The Pundit Abaji Scholarship for £1008
- The Gupta Dan Scholarship for £500

These are all open to current students of the OCHS for fees, maintenance, or research costs. Students should apply by sending a CV and letter of application to the Academic Director.

1. Research projects and events

The Academic Administrator should encourage and facilitate the development of research projects by the Academic Planning Committee and its contacts. He or she is responsible for:

- Collecting proposals and where necessary bringing them to the attention of the Academic Planning Committee for consideration;
- Developing the content of proposals, where appropriate;

- Overseeing or personally preparing applications and fundraising;
- Managing the organisation of the actual project or event;
- Managing communications and liaison with partners;
- Publicising projects or events, where appropriate.

When fundraising, there is a range of usual sources to which to look, and advice on this can be had from the Academic Planning Committee. The British Academy and AHRC can be valuable sources, although applications to the AHRC must be routed through the Theology or other University faculties, as the main applicant for the project must be a Higher Education Institution (HEI), defined as an institution which receives its funding from the government.

For reference, a resource of applications to date can be found at: O:\OCHS Academic Administrator\Templates\Research Projects.

A list of research projects ongoing or suggested can be found at: O:\OCHS Academic Administrator\Templates\Research Projects\Research Projects List.

Schedule of academic administration activities

Much of the work of the Academic Administrator revolves around the academic year as defined by the Oxford University calendar beginning in September (see www.ox.ac.uk/aboutoxford/dates.shtml).

Weekly during term

Mondays: Lectures and seminars for that week should be advertised to the relevant lists.

Mondays: Attend OCHS's general weekly administrative meeting.

Wednesdays: Academic Planning Committee. The Academic Administrator should notify members of any changes to the day or time.

Termly

Week 0: Advertise all lectures and seminars for Michaelmas term by email and by post.

Week 1: Begin Academic Planning Meetings.

Week 4: Next term's academic programme should be confirmed with details of dates and venues, speakers and titles.

Week 5: Book venues for next term's events.

Annual

December: Report to Board of Governors.

Week 4, Hilary Term: Advertise bursaries.

Week 6, Hilary Term: Deadline for bursaries.

Week 7, Hilary Term: Decide bursaries at Academic Planning Meeting.

Week 8, Hilary Term: Inform students of results and make payments.

Week 6, Trinity Term: Submit report to Academic Council and Board of Governors.

Week 9, Trinity Term: Present report to Academic Council.