

Review of Lady Margaret Hall Foundation Year

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1. Executive Summary

The Lady Margaret Hall Foundation Year Pilot Project was reviewed over two days, 14th-15th May following the guidance of a set of Terms of Reference agreed in advance (**Appendix A**). This document outlines the findings of that review and makes some recommendations for next stages of the project.

Overall, the project is a bold undertaking, which in the current climate of poor media response to Oxford University's recent publishing of its Admissions Report provides an important opportunity for the wider University to benefit from improved diversity in its student body. Widening Participation should not only be considered in terms of social justice and social mobility, and the benefits to the students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to develop and reach their potential, but there should also be consideration of the benefit to the University community to have a range of experiences and backgrounds which has been shown to improve the education experience for all students. Highly selective universities provide the graduates who go on to shape the country's future and those individuals should be more representative of the whole population.

There is a problem of how to recognise and evaluate fairly the impact that socio-economic deprivation has on an individual's educational attainment. Many universities resolve this issue by using Foundation Programmes, rather than simply making lower grade offers for direct entry to year 1, which not only allows some amelioration of the lack of social and cultural capital affecting student attainment but is also seen by many as a more transparent, fairer system.

This pilot project provides Oxford University with the opportunity to consider how it may utilise a Foundation Programme more widely as an additional widening participation initiative to address issues of diversity.

2. Overview

2.1. Introduction

2.1.1. A review of the Foundation Year (FY) developed by Lady Margaret Hall (LMH) was conducted by Catherine Marshall MA Oxon, EdD Durham.

2.1.2. Dr Marshall was involved in the development and delivery of the Durham University Foundation Programme which was introduced in 1997. Since 1997, over 2000 students have been enrolled on the programme with, on average, 65% progressing to Durham University degree programmes and 10% progressing to degrees at other institutions. Dr Marshall was Director of the Foundation Centre between 2000 and 2017 and inaugural Chair of the Foundation Year Network 2014-2017.

2.1.3. Evidence was collated from documentation provided by the Foundation team, other documentation available generally, and from interviews with key members of staff, students, and other stakeholders.

- FY Director, Co-ordinator and Administrator
- FY Management Group
- FY Tutors: Humanities and Science
- LMH Principal
- Member of LMH Governing Body
- Donors/Alumni
- Students current FY 2017/18
- Students – last year, FY 2016 currently in 1st year at LMH
- Student who studied FY 2016 (not at Oxford, progressed elsewhere)
- JCR Members
- Deputy Director of Undergraduate Admissions
- Head of House and/or Senior Tutor,
 - Somerville College
 - St Anne's College
 - Trinity College
- Representative of The Brilliant Club
- Representative of the SEREN network
- 6th Form College Teacher

2.2. Summative Commendations and Recommendations based on the Terms of Reference for the quality review of the Foundation Year which are to review and provide commentary on:

Terms of Reference	Summative Commendations	Ref	Summative Recommendations	Ref
The Foundation Year and its relationship with LMH and University strategy regarding outreach and admissions.	The Foundation Year has clearly engaged with the University's own definition of widening participation and added evidence-based analysis of deprivation which provides a more nuanced approach than that with some of the larger data sets.	2.1.1	That the University Admissions Office continues to work with LMH to explore ways to use their flagging system more widely. That the University consider including the FY in the OFFA agreement	2.3.4 2.6.2.1. 3
The impact of the Foundation Year on:				
(a) students	The FY students report increased confidence and opportunities	2.5.1	That the FY team ensure that access issues for students have been resolved That the FY team explores ways to support integration of FY students during Freshers' week That the FY team consider issues around a dignified exit process for those not progressing to Oxford	2.5.2 2.5.3 2.5.6
(b) staff	Those staff engaged with the review were	2.4.4 2.4.8	That the College explores tutors being able to count	2.2.7

	enthusiastic and positive about the FY		admissions work against their teaching stint	
(c) university			That LMH continue to work with other Colleges, Departments and the central University to showcase the FY more widely	2.6.1 2.7.4
(d) external stakeholders	The FY has built good links with external stakeholders who report improved perception of Oxford as a result	2.3.5		
The quality of the Foundation Year in the following areas:				
recruitment of target group	The FY flagging system is a more certain approach to targeting students for whom socio-economic deprivation has impeded their academic achievement.	2.1.3		
access and admissions;			That the FY team explore any alternatives to the timing of the undergraduate admissions process to the University	2.3.7
curriculum design and programme structure;	There is a reflective and flexible approach to ensure the programme is fit for	2.2.3	That the FY team consider linking learning outcomes to assessment and that they review how and when	2.4.1 2.4.6

	purpose		marking criteria are used to support student improvement	
teaching, learning and assessment;	The module documentation is clear and comprehensive	2.4.1 2.4.11	That the FY team explore ways to put more space between the processes of teaching, assessment and admissions	2.4.10
academic and pastoral support and guidance;	There is, appropriately, a strong emphasis on Academic Practice skills and the tutorial	2.4.2 2.4.3	That the FY team continue the process of tailoring the non-subject material more closely to the progressing subject and consider the use of an assessment diary	2.4.5 2.4.7
the provision and use of learning resources (including staff resources);	There is evidence of excellent, engaging teaching	2.4.4 2.4.8	Consider staff-training on Foundation level delivery	2.5.5 2.4.8
quality assurance mechanisms.	The team are using many mechanisms to evaluate the project	2.2 2.5.4 2.6.1. 3.1	That the FY team explore with students how best to elicit feedback in a non-anonymous situation	2.5.4
financial resources.	The engagement of alumni with this project is to be commended as are the clear efforts to build links with other Colleges as a way of expanding the project	2.1.4 2.7.1 2.7.3	That LMH continue to work with other Colleges, Departments and the central University to showcase the FY more widely	2.6.1
Whether the Foundation Year, as currently designed, is appropriate for its	The College is to be commended on taking the unilateral initiative to develop this programme	2.2.5 2.6.3	The Foundation Year as currently designed is suitable as a pilot project. This should be used as a stepping stone towards a	3

context.			University validated Foundation Programme for all Colleges and Departments.	
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3. Main Report: Review of the taught provision

3.1. Key features of the Programme

3.1.1. This is a programme designed for students from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education due to socio-economically derived educational disadvantage. This is a very specific group of people who are generally difficult to reach as evidenced by Oxford's recently released Admissions Report (1).

3.1.2. The Programme is modelled on Foundation Programmes which can be found in many other HE institutions across the UK and specifically with the support of Trinity College Dublin which has successfully run Foundation programmes for twenty years.

3.1.3. Unlike the majority of UK Foundation Programmes, it is a stand-alone programme, requiring students to apply to the FY and then subsequently to the degree programme.

3.1.4. The LMH programme is currently being funded by donation, particularly from College alumni and there does seem to be a clear appetite for alumni support of such initiatives.

3.2. Relevance to Benchmarks and other points of reference

3.2.1. There is nationally very little guidance on Foundation Year Benchmarking; national subject benchmarks and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications do not explicitly refer to Year 0 provision. Generally, the Aims and Learning Outcomes of such programmes need to adequately reflect the requirements of the institution to which the majority of the students will be progressing.

- 3.2.2. Most institutions do this by collaboration between those delivering the Foundation provision and those delivering Year 1, in conjunction with tracking of Foundation students' subsequent performance.
- 3.2.3. The small size of the Programme at LMH lends itself well to the essential development required during this initial phase and there is a clearly flexible and reflective approach to the pilot project, with adjustments being made from year to year.
- 3.2.4. The delivery of Foundation Programmes appears to be becoming more common in UK universities. In 2010, an analysis showed that 76 institutions offered some sort of Foundation Programme to Home/EU students (2); a current search of UCAS shows 129 providers (3).
- 3.2.5. The LMH programme has more in common with the Trinity College Dublin model than those found more generally in the UK. While there are many different models of Foundation Provision in UK universities (2), they all have in common the single point of entry at Year 0 and progression to Year 1 on successful completion of the year, plus any grade requirement. This is unlike the LMH model which requires students to apply to the Foundation Year and then to the University Programmes.
- 3.2.6. The aim of Foundation Programmes is to widen participation and UK universities focus on this in different ways. Some such as the Durham University Foundation Programme are designed for non-traditional, mature students and consequently have no entry requirements, others, similar to the programme at LMH focus on young students from disadvantaged backgrounds and set varieties of entry requirements based on A levels or vocational qualifications.
- 3.2.7. Progression requirements differ across universities, with some e.g. Durham University progression is dependent on passing the programme, for others e.g. Leeds University there is a separate, higher, progression grade, while others e.g. Loughborough have a range of different progression requirements for different degrees.

3.3. Admissions Process

- 3.3.1. LMH uses an admissions process that draws heavily on the definition of Widening Participation students that Oxford University uses in its own undergraduate admissions cycle and OFFA targets, including data from ACORN, POLAR, NS-SEC and School flags.
- 3.3.2. Applicants are recruited through a combination of communication work, school outreach visits and collaboration with organisations working with 16-18-year-olds. The FY team report that they have received applications from students at 166 schools in the first year and this has risen to 285 in the most recent round of admissions.
- 3.3.3. A key difference from the general Oxford undergraduate admissions process is the way in which eligibility is determined for the LMH programme, with proof of income being required. As part of this process it has been determined that some of these students would not have been flagged by the standard admissions flagging process.

Oxford University: Undergraduate	LMH Foundation Year
UCAS application	LMH online application
Deadline October	Deadline February
Not screened for eligibility	Screened for eligibility
Personal Statement (4000-character limit)	Essay – with key points to cover, no strict limit on length
One reference	Two references
Free-form references	Directed-form references
Pre-admissions test – not all subjects	No pre-admissions test
Interview	Interview

- 3.3.4. Currently the Admissions Office at Oxford do not feel that they have the capacity to engage with the same level of detail as used in the LMH flagging system. There are always difficulties in getting a true measure of the effect of socio-economic pressures on student achievement (4) and there is a recognition though that the current level of information does lead to “false positives” i.e. applicants who are identified as disadvantaged when they are not. In this regard the LMH process is following the Sutton Trust recommendation

that “there should be greater use of individual-level contextual indicators”. (4 p. 5)

3.3.5. The LMH group have formed links with a range of outreach groups e.g. The Brilliant Club and Seren to publicise the programme. This helps reach the appropriate students who are eligible for the course.

3.3.5.1. The Brilliant Club is a charity which was set up specifically to improve widening participation in highly selective universities. The main focus of their work is to mobilise PhD students into schools, and deliver a taught module based on their research to pupils in year 5 through to 6th form. They also organise trips into universities. They have worked with 600 schools and 12,000 children and are planning to expand into Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland next year. They recognise that there is a perception problem; that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds do not see Oxford as a realistic goal.

3.3.5.2. The Seren network is based in Wales and is a network of regional hubs designed to support Wales’ brightest sixth formers achieve their academic potential and gain access to leading universities. One of the hubs – Bridgend – promoted the LMH FY in their highest deprivation wards which led to 5 young people submitting applications, with one being successful. The programme was very well-received as a positive action on the part of Oxford to improve social mobility.

3.3.6. Due to the small number of places available and the element of goodwill inherent in the pilot project, not all subjects are available for students to make applications to as these are dependent on whether a tutor is available and willing to take Foundation students in any particular year. It would be better practice and more transparent to have standard subjects to which students can apply to each year. This could be achieved by expanding the programme to include more colleges and widening the pool of tutors involved in the teaching.

3.3.7. The students described the timing of the undergraduate admissions process as problematic; they arrive only a couple of weeks before they need to submit their UCAS application and are sitting subject aptitude tests a few weeks after

that, with the interviews in December. They feel that they have not had time to benefit sufficiently from the programme before they are being assessed for undergraduate admission. This was echoed by tutors who are trying to make an assessment on how well a student will perform by the end of the year.

3.4. Review of Teaching

3.4.1. The Programme has a set of clear module descriptors which outline the aims and learning outcomes of each module alongside the modes of learning and assessment. These could be improved by making more explicit links between the assessment and the learning outcomes; mapping clearly how each learning outcome will be assessed.

3.4.2. The Programme has a strong emphasis on Academic Practice Skills, recognising that what these students lack is not intelligence or aptitude, but more intangible aspects of education associated with the type of social and cultural capital associated with more advantaged backgrounds.

3.4.3. There is, appropriately, a clear focus on the tutorial as the method of learning. Students are expected to complete work in advance of tutorials independently and this is designed to support students if they progress to Year 1 of undergraduate study at Oxford.

3.4.4. The general response from both cohorts of students was that the teaching was excellent, with students reporting tutors' enthusiasm for their subjects and describing the subject-specific teaching as unrivalled.

3.4.5. There was a clearly articulated wish from both cohorts that the work for the non-subject specific modules should be more tailored to the students' degree choice. The point was made that essay writing skills take different levels of priority in different subjects e.g. the students drew a comparison between the essay requirements for English and Physics

3.4.6. One group of students described the lack of grading of some work as difficult indicating that it did not support them knowing how to improve. The handbook contains very clearly articulated marking criteria and if these are used in

conjunction with feedback to students then it should be very clear to students what is required of them to improve their work.

- 3.4.7. Both groups of students indicated that they felt that there could be better communication between tutors on the course in terms of the work set as at times the workload was very high. This issue was echoed by the JCR who reported that in discussion with FY students the number of essays being required was higher than that for first year students. Students reported being required to write five essays in the first week. This may be lack of understanding of the level of work required. An assessment diary may be of assistance clearly outlining what work is required each week – this may be of assistance to both students and tutors in scheduling work.
- 3.4.8. The tutors interviewed were obviously engaged and enthusiastic about the project and had formed strong, affectionate links with the students. There were clearly differences in experience of how to manage a Year 0 curriculum depending on the subject and the degree to which the cultural and/or social capital has led to deficit. For example, many poorer schools struggle to develop a comprehensive laboratory experience for science students, whereas for other subjects the difficulty may be in getting a broad familiarity with the literary canon. One tutor expressed an interest in working with a trained educational specialist on how to introduce a subject to students without overlapping with the topics covered in Year 1.
- 3.4.9. A cohort of 10 or 11 students does not lend itself to lectures being part of the learning experience, however, this will be part of their learning process in Year 1. There was a mixed response to this deficit, with some students stating that they thought the ability to attend lectures was unnecessary, others that a video of a lecture was sufficient and others that they would have welcomed the chance to attend lectures.
- 3.4.10. Both tutors and students expressed some concern about the overlap between teaching, assessment and admissions. The same tutors are seeing students for tutorials, assessing them on their performance in those tutorials, assessing them in examinations and making admissions decisions about them. Both tutors and students expressed a desire for a clearer distinction between these processes.

3.4.11. One tutor commented that students generally performed better in discussions, demonstrating original and interesting ideas on the material covered than they did in assessments such as essays or examinations. Although students are assessed on their tutorial performance, there is still a much greater emphasis given to achievement in written forms such as essays and examinations. It is tempting to ask why the FY does not rethink the assessment process and introduce more innovative assessment methods. There is always a tension in such programmes between supporting students by embracing the good practice outlined in Assessment for Learning methods but at the same time recognising the need to prepare them for the assessment methods they will encounter in subsequent years of study.

3.4.12. The review did not consider issues of quality of learning and teaching, other than to discuss module evaluations with students. Most Foundation Programmes nationally follow university procedures on moderation of work by other staff, anonymous marking, grade analysis during an annual review, and the use of external examiners in the examining process. These may be issues for consideration in the next stage of the project.

3.5. Student Experience

3.5.1. On the whole, the students interviewed, including the student who had not progressed to Oxford, were extremely positive about their experience. Most of them indicated that they felt that they had developed in confidence during their time in the Foundation Year. One student described their delight in being “listened to” and enthused about being able to talk about politics without being considered “boring” and enjoying having the opportunity to attend formal dinners and go to the theatre.

3.5.2. There were practical issues around the students being associate members of the University rather than full student members which they felt affected their experience. There had been problems of access to departments and the Bodleian Library, although these have since been resolved by the FY team, they did lead to some students feeling that they were distinct from the main student body. They felt there were still issues around whether they can access other college libraries, visit other colleges for lunch etc., and while they are not

different from the main student body in this regard, the students described themselves as “not quite belonging” and “being in limbo”.

3.5.2.1. As associate members of the University the students are not eligible to make use of the University counselling service. The College has put its own support in place, but this means that students cannot access such services anonymously.

3.5.3. There were differences in their induction which the students felt made it harder for them to engage socially with other students. The FY students come to the College a week early and are inducted before Freshers’ week, because of this difference, they did not engage with the Freshers until after they had formed “cliques” making it hard to break in socially.

3.5.4. The students recognised that the administrative staff on the programme were keen to get feedback about the course and that this desire for feedback was genuine and necessary to help the programme improve. They did express concern, however, that they did not feel able to be completely honest if they had negative remarks to make as they were still being assessed on their course. The small number of students on the course makes anonymity a problem.

3.5.5. A few students expressed concern that they were being underestimated by some tutors indicating that some tutors may be struggling to find the right level for the “introduction to the introduction” as outlined in 2.4.8. It may be helpful in the regular tutor meetings to focus on what aspects of cultural and social capital difference need to be addressed rather than reprising A level topics.

3.5.6. There was concern expressed by members of the JCR and the first cohort of students that there should be a “dignified exit process” for those students who do not receive an offer in January. While the Foundation Coordinator clearly describe the project as providing a route to Oxford or other selective/Russell Group Universities, the students felt that some of the tutors were focused solely on progression to Oxford.

3.6. Views of the Project

3.6.1. This is a unilateral initiative by LMH, not yet fully embraced or to some degree even known about by the wider University. It has raised issues on a range of levels. The following points are an attempt to capture some of these concerns and the alternative views expressed by others interviewed over the course of the review. The majority of those who took part in the review did not themselves express some of the negative questions outlined below but reported others as having expressed them.

3.6.1.1. A number of people interviewed either asked themselves or reported that others had asked whether it was fair to make places available to Foundation Year students when there are many other students who would benefit from a place at Oxford University.

3.6.1.1.1. There is evidence (5) that there is inherent unfairness in the system currently. The targeted approach to flagging developed by LMH ensures that the places are going to those who demonstrably have socio-economic disadvantage and avoids some of the problems with the unnuanced data produced by such schemes as POLAR. One comment was that many staff do not understand that the appearance of equality in expecting applicants to achieve the same A level grades does not account for the disadvantage that some students are under. The LMH course was born out of recognition of the fact that education in the UK is not equal: a young person's chances of achieving top A Level grades are influenced more by their socio-economic background than by natural intelligence or work ethic. (6)

3.6.1.2. A further concern expressed was whether it is fair to the students who are brought in if they do not succeed or only achieve marginally e.g. at 2:2 level. There are concerns about raising aspirations if they are not fulfilled.

3.6.1.2.1. The focus of the LMH project is to support and prepare students for the subsequent modes of learning, in particular, the tutorial. It is this tutorial system which should ensure that students with disadvantages are supported and helped to achieve their

potential. While an argument could be made that the success of the programme can be evaluated once the students have progressed from year 1 to year 2, it will also be important to consider student experience and academic attainment on degree completion. No selection process is going to be faultless, there are students who enter the University from advantaged backgrounds, with high A level grades, who don't then go on to achieve their potential.

3.6.1.3. There were concerns expressed about whether the FY at LMH was sufficiently rigorous, given the high level of competition for access to the university.

3.6.1.3.1. The LMH FY is being evaluated in several ways. There are currently two research studies being conducted. One is being undertaken by Maynooth University, Ireland and it is a comparative study exploring the impact of the LMH course and the Trinity College Dublin course on the development of students' capability to participate in higher education. The second study is being undertaken by OU Department of Education and it focuses on the perspectives of Admissions Tutors regarding the FY.

3.6.1.3.2. Other universities have Foundation Programmes as part of their validated courses allowing for full quality assurance processes in place. Evidence indicates that students perform better when they attend pre-degree courses at the University they are going to progress to (7).

3.6.1.4. There was a question about whether it was not an expensive way to solve the widening participation issue.

3.6.1.4.1. Oxford has committed millions of pounds to outreach (over £17million in the latest OFFA agreement) (8) but as the latest information shows there are still discrepancies for example UK-domiciled BME applicants have an application success rate of 15.4% compared with 22.9% for white UK-domiciled applicants (1). One

individual commented that “cost is relative” indicating that it depends on what is important.

3.6.1.4.2. The current cost for the project is around £22k per student. Some of these costs could be reduced if the programme was expanded to include more Colleges. This would lead to economies of scale as well as widening the pool of alumni who might wish to support such a programme. This unit cost per student should be set against the fact that, unlike some other applicants to the University, FY students have not had a primary or second level education that has involved this level of private investment for any of their years in education. An intervention of this kind will likely have long-term, intergenerational impact that will yield social and economic returns much greater than the one-year course cost.

3.6.1.4.3. There was some discussion about the intangible benefits of the programme such as the benefit of having a more diverse community, the change in perception of the University as being more inclusive which are priceless, but difficult to quantify.

3.6.2. There was a query about whether the LMH FY was needed when there are other outreach programmes such as UNIQ. General Admissions training at Oxford is currently being enhanced with additional training in issues such as implicit bias and cultural awareness and supporting admissions tutors to make decisions on Personal Statements which focus less on those aspects of cultural and social capital, such as engagement with the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, which are associated with economic advantage.

3.6.2.1.1. 40% of teachers say they would never advise academically-gifted students to apply to Oxbridge (5). This is part of the perception issue that Oxford needs to overcome in order to improve diversity in the University.

3.6.2.1.2. One individual described the LMH FY as a USP (unique selling proposition). There has certainly been a great deal of positive media attention on this project, with positive responses from students and

alumni and it would appear that this is an excellent time to consolidate and build on the progress made so far.

3.6.2.1.3. Part of the documentation considered by the review was the University of Oxford's OFFA agreement which does not seem to refer to the LMH FY.

3.6.2.1.4. One question raised queried the reputational damage to Oxford if it didn't continue the programme at a time when Cambridge has announced the development of its own university-wide Foundation Programme by 2020.

3.6.3. To summarise – there seems to be a tension between those who want there to be change and those who are concerned about how that change may impact the University as a whole. From the point of this review, change is vital, not only because of social justice and social mobility arguments about making an Oxford education more accessible to those from disadvantaged backgrounds, but because of the benefit to the whole university community a diverse population brings. In the USA universities pursue a stated goal of constructing their admissions around achieving a diverse mix of students with different backgrounds and talents. This is based on evidence which indicates that diversity leads to a better educational experience, with students more likely to engage with their learning when exposed to people from different backgrounds and perspectives (9). In defending this position, Bollinger (2007) states that “it is far less important to reward past performance – and impossible to isolate an applicant's objective talent from the contextual realities shaping that performance – than to make the best judgement about which applicants can contribute to help form the strongest class that will study and live together” (10 p. 48).

3.7. Sustainability of the Project

3.7.1. The project is currently being financed by donations, particularly from LMH alumni. This is apparently a popular use for alumni donations.

3.7.2. In addition to the financial cost of the programme, there are elements of “pro bono” work by some of the tutors not all of which is necessarily counted against their teaching stint. This may not be sustainable in the long-term unless the initiative moves from the pilot scheme to a more embedded programme. In the short-term it may be possible to count admissions work for the FY against teaching stint.

3.7.3. One way in which the project could become sustainable would be to expand the project across more Colleges. There is interest from other Colleges: Trinity, Somerville and St Anne’s Colleges took part in this review. Several points were made during these discussions:

- There was enthusiasm for the LMH FY and other Colleges were interested in exploring / engaging with the project.
- The LMH flagging system was described as impressive and should be used more widely.
- It was felt to be important that different colleges did not start developing their own initiatives and adding to the complexity of outreach, it would be better to adopt the LMH FY.
- More Colleges becoming involved would lead to economies of scale, improving the sustainability of the project and widening the pool of tutors involved, making more subjects available.
- Ideally the programme should be run centrally as a University validated programme.
- It would be simpler for students to apply to the University to study “[Subject] with Foundation”, as is the case in other UK University Foundation programmes. Thus, students would make one application to the University and progress from year 0 to year 1 on satisfactory completion of the Foundation Year. Students would then also be eligible for student finance.
- If students were full members of the University, they would then also be eligible for student bursaries and fee waivers available under the OFFA agreement or the Moritz Heyman bursaries.
- It was very important for the University to be seen to be accessible and changing perceptions of the University externally was imperative and priceless.

3.7.4. For expansion of the project to be viable, there would need to be cooperation and engagement with the departments as well as central University staff and other Colleges. This review was not able to encompass departmental views beyond those offered by College Tutors. Perhaps that deficit in itself outlines some of the work to be done to ensure wider engagement with the project.

4. Conclusion; Is the Foundation Year, as currently designed, appropriate for its context?

This is an excellent pilot project and LMH are to be commended on taking the initiative to develop a programme to help overcome the inertia in Oxford University's attempts to change the diversity of the student body. An initial success rate of 7/10 students progressing to the first year of an Oxford is comparable across the sector. The enthusiasm and engagement of the staff is ensuring that the best possible experience is being provided for students, and the support from Trinity College Dublin is informing the development of a suitable curriculum. There are recommendations from within LMH and other parts of the University that the next stage is to validate the programme as an Oxford University course and include other Colleges and Departments. The ambition should be to engage all Undergraduate Colleges and all Departments. There would be resolution of many of the issues outlined in the review above if the programme was validated in the same way as other UK University Foundation programmes:

- One admissions process to Year 0 would alleviate the issues around the timing of the second admissions process.
- The tension between tutors teaching, assessing and being responsible for admissions would reduce
- Students would be full members of the University and therefore
 - Eligible for student finance
 - Eligible for bursaries and fee waivers under the University's OFFA agreement
 - Eligible for any other support e.g. Moritz Heyman
 - Able to access all student areas and support e.g. library induction and counselling
- The programme would be evaluated with the central University quality enhancement processes ensuring transparent rigour in the delivery.

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Appendix A

Terms of Reference for the External Review of the Foundation Year

The purpose of the external review is to:

- a) facilitate a critical self-assessment of the LMH Foundation Year by LMH staff and the partner organisations involved in the programme;
- b) benefit from a constructive commentary by an external reviewer who is an expert in the field at a senior level;
- c) provide an opportunity to review the content, relevance, curriculum design and delivery of the Foundation Year in the light of feedback obtained from students, staff, examiners;
- d) ensure that quality and academic standards are being maintained on the Foundation Year and any areas of concern are identified and addressed;
- e) assess the strategic direction of the Foundation Year in the context of the College and University strategy, and external developments related to the College.

Terms of Reference The terms of reference for the quality review of the Foundation year are to review and provide commentary on:

1. The Foundation Year and its relationship with LMH and University strategy regarding outreach and admissions.
2. The impact of the Foundation Year on (a) students (b) staff (c) university (d) external stakeholders.
3. The quality of the Foundation Year in the following areas:
 - recruitment of target group
 - access and admissions;
 - curriculum design and programme structure;
 - teaching, learning and assessment;
 - academic and pastoral support and guidance;
 - the provision and use of learning resources (including staff resources);
 - quality assurance mechanisms.
 - accommodation and future space needs;
 - financial resources.
4. Whether the Foundation Year, as currently designed, is appropriate for its context.

Reviewers The review is scheduled to take place on the 14th and 15th May 2018 with the following reviewer confirmed: Dr Catherine Marshall, University of Durham, UK