

National Report for the Business Education Support Team

Explicit and Implicit Judgements of Quality

An Analysis of the QAA Business and Management Subject Review Reports (2000-2001)

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Executive Summary

Subject review was the principal quality assurance mechanism for higher education in the UK between 1997 and 2001. It was conducted under the auspices of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). Although subject review has attracted a considerable amount of criticism, arguably certain aspects are of relevance to the ongoing debate about what constitutes 'good' and 'bad' practice in teaching and learner support. It is therefore pertinent to ask whether subject review generated anything that could assist business educators as they seek to enhance the quality of their academic practice.

The report summarises the findings of a BEST-funded project, the aim of which was to capture and disseminate 'the richness of academic practice identified' in the 164 subject review reports for business and management (2000-2001). A software package, QSR N6, was used to facilitate engagement with the content of the reports and the production of qualitative analyses. Quantitative analysis was also carried out to compare performance by institutional type and 'aspect'.

The results of the study provide an insight into the strengths and weaknesses of business and management provision across a range of institutional contexts. There were predictable differences in average grades between institutions, with post-1992 university providers performing most strongly. Providers performed most poorly in relation to judgements of provision in 'Teaching, Learning and Assessment' and 'Quality Management and Enhancement'. Assessment and feedback is an area criticised for poor practice in a large number of reports. Quality assurance mechanisms and staff development were also areas of concern for reviewers. By contrast, a number of providers were praised for developing flexible and integrated curricula, student skill development, using a variety of teaching approaches and fostering student participation in class.

While the espoused purpose of subject review was 'fitness for purpose', keyword searches of laudatory language identified a series of 'pedagogic principles' which formed an implicit evaluative framework. The existence of such principles suggests a mismatch between the espoused philosophy of subject review, 'fitness for purpose', and that of quality as 'excellence'. The principles identified were: *flexibility; strategic thinking; transparency; pedagogic pluralism; consistency; collaboration; stakeholder involvement; self-criticism* and *embedding good practice*. While contestable, many of these principles may be derived from theories of learning and teaching and, if applied wisely, can enhance the quality of the student learning experience. They provide the basis for further research and development and an educational development agenda for business and management providers.

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1.0 Introduction and Problem Definition

1.1 Scope of the project

The research project on which this report is based was commissioned by BEST in January 2003. The aim of the project was to capture and disseminate 'the richness of academic practice identified in the Subject Review Reports for business, management and accountancy' (BEST 2002). Subject Review was conducted under the auspices of the Quality Assurance Agency for higher education (QAA). In total there were 164 reports covering both higher education and further education institutions. A breakdown of these reports by institution is

	Number	Total
pre 1992 universities ¹	18	
post 1992 universities	25	
university colleges	5	
Other	8	
Higher education institutions (HEIs) ²		56
Further education institutions (FEIs)		108
TOTAL		164

Table 1: Reports By Institution

shown in Table 1.

The reviews to which the reports relate were undertaken during 2000-2001. As well as mainstream business and management courses, a number also covered cognate subject areas such as hospitality, leisure, recreation, sport, tourism and, in a very few cases, economics. Courses ranged from Higher National Certificate/ Diplomas in Business Studies, through first degrees and professional qualifications (e.g. Chartered Institute of Marketing; Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) to postgraduate courses (e.g. MSc in Information Management for Business; MSc in International Marketing Management). Not surprisingly, the distribution of provision very much reflects the status of institutions, with FEIs being the major providers of HNC/D courses and HEIs of degrees and postgraduate qualifications. Hence the data in Table 1 should be read with this in mind. Although a minority of providers are universities, they account for the majority of the business and management courses/programmes in terms of the numbers of students.

Notes

1. Relatively few pre-1992 universities were included since a considerable number had been reviewed during 1993/4 under the previous quality assurance process, known as Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA), and for various reasons it was not necessary for them to be reviewed again. A complete listing of all the institutions covered by TQA and Subject Review can be found in Appendix A.

2. Four FEIs were subject to a second review visit. In two of these cases the report on the second visit was published and both reports have been included in the totals. In the other two cases, the second report is not available and therefore only the first report has been included. Thus, provision in a total of 162 institutions was reviewed.

1.2 The nature of the subject review process

The stated purposes of the QAA subject review were:

to ensure that the public funding provided is supporting education of an acceptable quality, to provide public information on that education through the publication of reports... and to provide information and insights to encourage improvements in education. (QAA 2001a)

In reviewing the quality of education, the approach adopted was a form of criterion-referenced assessment, with the criteria being set by the institution being reviewed in a self assessment document (SAD). The criteria were in the form of a statement of aims and objectives, which reflected the priorities of institutions with respect to their provision. This approach is described in each report in the following terms:

Subject review is carried out in relation to the subject aims and objectives set by each provider. It measures the extent to which each subject provider is successful in achieving its aims and objectives (QAA 2001a)

In setting their aims and objectives providers took account of external factors, such as professional body requirements and subject benchmarking. However, it should be noted that at the time of the subject review visits for business and management, the subject benchmark statement for business and management education had only recently been published and few institutions made explicit use of this in preparing their SAD.

Since subject review was based on a form of criterion- (as opposed to norm-) referenced assessment, the making of comparisons between institutions needs to be treated with care. In each report, the following warning appears in the opening text:

Readers should be cautious in making comparisons of subject providers solely on the basis of subject review outcomes. Comparisons between providers with substantively different aims and objectives would have little validity. (QAA 2001a)

Another cautionary note relates to the language of the reports. Since they are in the public domain and intended for public consumption the language used tends to be rather guarded or even anodyne. Extreme terms tend to be eschewed, even where provision is deemed to be exceptionally good or bad. Moreover, they do not contain references to individuals or practices that could be linked to a particular person.

Notwithstanding these qualifications, the reports are a rich source of material from which much can be learnt about business and management education that is of mutual benefit to all providers.

1.3 Structure and content of QAA subject review reports

All the reports are available on the QAA website. Those covering business and management can be found at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/revreps/subjrev/Business%20and%20Management%20Studies/Business%20and%20Management%20Studies%20Index.htm>

Each report has a similar structure:

- ❖ an introduction providing background information about the institution and the location of business and management within the academic structure of the institution and listing the provision (i.e. courses and programmes) covered by the review;
- ❖ the statement of aims and objectives taken from the SAD for the provision under review;
- ❖ a summary of the review in terms of the 4-point scale used to grade provision (see Section 1.4); and
- ❖ a commentary on the quality of education, with respect to the six aspects of provision reviewed.

In addition to the individual institutional subject review reports, their contents were summarised in a Subject Overview Report for Business and Management.

1.4 The grading system

Within the framework of the aims and objectives, each institution reviewed was awarded a grade for six separate aspects of provision. These were:

- ❖ Curriculum design, content and organisation
- ❖ Teaching, learning and assessment
- ❖ Student progression and achievement
- ❖ Student support and guidance
- ❖ Learning resources
- ❖ Quality management and enhancement

In order to determine the grade, the following tests were applied:

To what extent do the student learning experience and student achievement, within this aspect of provision, contribute to meeting objectives set by the subject provider?

Do the objectives set, and the level of attainment of those objectives, allow the aims set by the subject provider to be met? (QAA 2001a)

The grades and what they signified are shown in Table 2.

If a provider scored at least 2 on each of the six aspects of provision the quality of education was approved. The reviewers had to decide collectively whether or not there were sufficient shortcomings to justify deducting one or more marks on the basis of evidence.

Grade	Descriptor
1	The aims and/or objectives set by the subject provider are not met; there are major shortcomings that must be rectified.
2	This aspect makes an acceptable contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives, but significant improvements could be made. The aims set by the subject provider are broadly met.
3	This aspect makes a substantial contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives; however there is scope for improvement. The aims set by the subject provider are substantially met.
4	This aspect makes a full contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives. The aims set by the subject provider are met.

Table 2: The grading system used by subject reviewers

1.5 Concepts of quality

While subject review was based on a 'fitness for purpose' definition of quality, the aggregation of grades awarded led many to interpret a maximum score of 24 (that is, a grade 4 in each of the six aspects) as indicating 'perfection' or 'excellence'. Indeed, an aggregate score of between 22 and 24 was equated with the notion of quality as 'excellence' in many university league tables. This is, perhaps, not surprising, given that 'excellent' was a category used in the Teaching Quality Assessment process, which operated between 1992 and 1995 (Brown 2004). However, as many of the reports illustrate, institutions with a top score could still have shortcomings. In these instances, subject reviewers did not deem them to be sufficiently serious to warrant dropping a grade. Institutions were awarded a grade 4 in each aspect unless evidence of poor practice came to light that was sufficiently serious to warrant the deduction of one or more grades.

Confusion over which definition of quality underlay subject review was further compounded by the fact that the funding councils have a statutory obligation to ensure that higher education provision offers value from public resources invested in it. In other words, its remit accords with a 'value for money' definition of quality. Thus, at least three of the five different broad approaches to quality in relation to higher education (Harvey and Green 1993) appear to have influenced the process of Subject Review.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Overview

In carrying out the project, the researchers undertook four major tasks. These were:

- ❖ a detailed textual analysis of the contents of the Business and Management Subject Overview Report;
- ❖ qualitative software analyses of the institutional subject review reports covering both the evaluative content and specific aspects of the aims and objectives;
- ❖ highlighting examples of 'good practice' which could be followed up;
- ❖ reflection on, and dissemination of, findings.

2.2 Analysis of Business and Management Subject Overview Report

Careful consideration was given to the content of the Subject Overview Report because it was felt to offer insights into what the QAA considered to be the most significant features of business and management education. To this extent it provided a useful starting point and helped to establish a short list of elements of provision¹ to which particular attention could be given during the detailed interrogation of the contents of institutional reports.

Appendix C provides a series of quotations from the report to illustrate those elements of provision that appeared to be of considerable consequence to its compilers. References in the report to elements where there is some quantification are summarised in Appendix D.

From our initial review of this material we identified a short list of keywords that seemed to reflect a number of implicit principles governing the judgements of the reviewers (see Table 3).

These principles are explored more fully in Section 4.2. It needs to be emphasised, however, that they did not form part of the formally prescribed features of Subject Review. Moreover, they do not sit easily with the 'fitness for purpose' view of quality (see Section 1.5) and the eschewing of comparisons. Rather they are much more closely associated with a view of quality as 'excellence'.

2.3 Analyses of institutional reports

To facilitate engagement with the substantial body of text from all 164 institutional reports a qualitative data software package, QSR N6, was used. The reports, in a 'rich text' format, were initially downloaded from the QAA

Aspect of provision	Keywords
Curriculum design, content and organisation	flexibility; coherence; integration of theory with practice; vocational
Teaching, learning and assessment	strategy; active learning; independent learning; assessment; feedback
Student progression and achievement	retention
Student support and guidance	strategy; support for specific learning needs
Learning resources	strategy; liaison
Quality management and enhancement	self-critical; peer observation; follow up

Table 3: Keywords identifying implicit principles governing the judgements of reviewers.

website and subsequently pruned to remove standard material that was common to all of them. They were then imported to QSR N6. This enabled the researchers to undertake keyword searches and have all the sentences² containing the specified words brought together in a form that enabled them to be investigated more systematically and fully. In other words, it was an electronically mediated form of 'scissors and paste'.

In using this facility, an initial task was that of identifying those institutions that had received very positive comments from subject reviewers and might therefore be worth investigating more fully. Here the process adopted involved a number of stages.

First, the text of all the reports was searched using a number of 'laudatory' key words. Since the number of potential words was very large, it was necessary to be selective and to proceed incrementally. The choice was determined by a close reading the Subject Overview Report and a small selection of institutional reports. The selected words and phrases were:

- ❖ excellent;
- ❖ good practice;
- ❖ best practice;
- ❖ innovat(-ion/-ive); and
- ❖ commend(-able/-ably)

This generated a considerable number of references but, as explained below, some did not meet various additional criteria. Further laudatory words were used for a restricted range of searches:

Notes

1. Throughout this report the phrase 'elements of provision' is used to refer to features within the six 'aspects of provision' explained in Section 1.4.

2. QSR N6 allows researchers to set their preferred 'text units'. The alternatives are line, sentence and paragraph. For the project reported here, lines were inappropriate because key information might be missing and paragraphs were too broad in their coverage.

- ❖ exemplary
- ❖ impress(-ed/-ive)
- ❖ sound
- ❖ distinctive

The second stage involved the researchers in reviewing the text generated by QSR, and applying certain criteria to discriminate between those references that were of particular value for the purposes of the project, in so far as it was possible to tell from the report, and those that were not. The criteria were that the text should make reference to:

- ❖ particular features of business and management provision, as opposed to procedures and services that were university-wide (e.g. teaching accommodation, library provision) apart from those which had a special resonance for business and management (e.g. quality enhancement, training and staff development);
- ❖ activities which were strongly pedagogic in orientation, defined broadly to include curriculum design, teaching learning and assessment, student support and quality assurance; and
- ❖ practices that were sufficiently precise and tangible to enable them to be followed up.

The search for references which met these criteria was also informed, in part, by the need to identify institutions that were performing well in areas of provision where other institutions were relatively weak. In other words, they could be seen as potential 'role models'.

Areas of weakness emerged from the initial content analysis of the overview report. They were also identified by examining the summaries of issues, identified at the end of each subject review report, that needed to be addressed by institutions in order to improve 'the quality of education in business and management'. It was felt to be important to do this in order to ensure that justice was done to the diversity of provision and performance within the sector.

The final stage was the preparation of a list from which those that potentially had something to offer could be easily identified.

This relatively systematic trawl through the institutional reports was supplemented by what can best be described as 'ad hoc' interrogations of the material at the researchers' disposal. Some of these were triggered by requests from BEST and others by the interests and concerns of the researchers (see Appendix B).

3.0 Findings

Broadly speaking the findings can be grouped into those that are essentially quantitative in nature (Section 3.1) and those that are primarily qualitative (Sections 3.2 to 3.5). For the latter, particular attention is given to the reviewers' comments on three aspects of provision: curriculum design, content and organisation; teaching, learning and assessment; and quality management and enhancement.

3.1 Distribution of grades

The Subject Overview Report contains some potentially useful comparative data, which have been summarised in Tables 4 (a and b).

As the data in these tables and the supporting commentary in the report illustrate, the reviewers found considerable variation in provision between both institutions and the aspects assessed. Although of limited significance, such aggregate data can help to put the performance of individual institutions into a broader context.

<i>Aspect and category of provider</i>	<i>Grade</i>		
	2	3	4
Curriculum design, content and organisation	6%	41%	53%
Higher education institutions	2%	30%	68%
Further education institutions	7%	48%	45%
Teaching, learning and assessment	12%	70%	18%
Higher education institutions	0%	70%	30%
Further education institutions	19%	71%	10%
Student progression and achievement	2%	40%	58%
Higher education institutions	0%	21%	79%
Further education institutions	5%	49%	46%
Student support and guidance	1%	17%	82%
Higher education institutions	0%	0%	100%
Further education institutions	2%	25%	73%
Learning resources	4%	30%	66%
Higher education institutions	0%	17%	83%
Further education institutions	6%	38%	56%
Quality management and enhancement	19%	56%	23%
Higher education institutions	9%	51%	40%
Further education institutions*	23%	59%	14%

*4% were awarded a grade 1. No grade 1s were awarded in any other aspect

Table 4a: Subject reviews for Business and Management – distribution of grades by sector

	Average total grade
Post-1992 universities	22.3
Pre-1992 universities	22.0
University colleges	21.7
Other higher education colleges	20.9
Further education colleges	19.8*

*This includes higher scores from three re-visits to further education institutions

Table 4b: Subject reviews for Business and Management – total grade averages by type of institution

3.2 Curriculum design, content and organisation

Detailed examination of institutional reports tended to confirm the priorities highlighted in the Subject Overview Report. Thus, a good quality curriculum for business and management is one which meets the following criteria:

- ❖ input from all the major stakeholders, including local employers, professional bodies and staff;
- ❖ currency and contemporaneity, underpinned by staff research interests and scholarly activities;
- ❖ coherence and integration;
- ❖ clear links with business practice and opportunities for relating theory and practice, such as work placements and 'live' projects, in the interests of ensuring a high degree of vocationality;
- ❖ progression, with respect to movement from directed to student-centred learning, knowledge acquisition, skill development (see teaching, learning and assessment);
- ❖ flexibility and option choice.

Many providers, particularly in FE, have some way to go before their curricula meet all these criteria.

Institutions which reviewers felt have demonstrable strengths in a number of these areas are shown in Appendix E.

3.3 Teaching, learning and assessment

Within this aspect of provision, the greatest need for additional attention would appear to be in the area of *assessment and feedback*. The Subject Overview Report draws attention to the fact that 'the majority of institutions awarded either a grade 2 or grade 3 for this aspect (of provision) were criticised for poor practice in assessment'. Likewise, feedback 'was a weak feature of provision.' Many providers were criticised for the poor quality of the feedback on students work.

In the case of *assessment* in general particular weaknesses include:

- ❖ inadequate/insufficient guidance for students;
- ❖ inconsistency;
- ❖ absence of assessment/marking criteria;
- ❖ mismatches between assessment tasks and criteria;
- ❖ mismatches between learning outcomes and assessment tasks;
- ❖ lack of variety in types of assessment used;
- ❖ burdensome nature of assessment load;
- ❖ failure to treat skills coherently, transparently and progressively;
- ❖ lack of opportunity for demonstrating higher-order skills, such as evaluation and analysis; and
- ❖ absence or limited scope of internal moderation procedures.

With regard to feedback on students' work, major shortcomings are:

- ❖ inconsistency and variability of practice;
- ❖ insufficient and inadequate guidance on how to improve performance;

- ❖ lacking in formality;
- ❖ not timely;
- ❖ unclear links with assessment criteria.

Those institutions that were specifically commended for their approach to assessment and/or feedback are listed in Appendix F.

Apart from assessment and feedback, a number of other features received particular attention in evaluative comments. These were:

- ❖ *skill development*, which includes the embedding of skills and ensuring an element of progression from lower to higher order skills (e.g. research, analytical), as well as concern over the failure of some providers to have a strategy for equipping students; *with ITs*
- ❖ the need for a variety of teaching approaches to reflect the range of learning outcomes being covered;
- ❖ the importance of fostering student participation and challenging students in teaching sessions.

However, it is not necessarily the case that these features map directly onto teaching, learning and assessment practices that were specifically commended. As the examples of commendations from grade 4 institutions shown in Appendix E illustrate, these tended to be the provision of good quality learning support materials, both paper-based and electronic, and the importance attached to adopting a strategic and planned approach to teaching, learning and assessment.

3.4 Quality management and enhancement

This aspect of provision caused the reviewers the greatest amount of concern. To secure improvements in provision, action is required both at the macro, or school/departmental level and at the micro, or programmatic level.

At the macro level, the need for a clearly articulated, formalised and visible strategy is seen as a crucial starting point. Such a strategy needs to:

- ❖ foster a strong sense of ownership on the part of all the key stakeholders (i.e. tutors, managers, students, employers, professional bodies and external examiners) by requiring their full involvement in managing, assuring and enhancing quality;
- ❖ be comprehensive in terms of levels at which it operates (i.e. institution, programme/course, subject, unit/module, tutors collectively and individually);
- ❖ be applied rigorously, systematically and consistently, with respect to the operation of procedures for gathering, recording and utilising data relating to practice;
- ❖ lead to the production of action plans for responding to and addressing issues raised and weaknesses identified;
- ❖ provide feedback to interested parties on actions taken, in order to close the 'quality loop'; and
- ❖ generate evidence to support claims made.

Underpinning the strategy should be a quality culture in which the principles of transparency, self-criticism and evaluation are to the fore.

The micro level covers specific processes and initiatives designed to assure and enhance quality. Here, particular shortcomings identified by reviewers were:

- ❖ the absence of mechanisms for disseminating innovation and sharing good/best practice (e.g. away days; programme team meetings, learning and teaching events); and
- ❖ insufficient attention being given to the appraisal and development of both new and experienced staff (e.g. induction, mentors, peer observation schemes, shadowing, secondments, entitlements, ILT membership, ring fenced resources).

Specific examples of good practice covering both the macro and micro levels that were singled out for commendation are listed in Appendix H.

3.5 Other aspects of provision

The remaining three aspects (student progression and achievement, student support and guidance, and learning resources) have been grouped together. This is because the issues are not so clear-cut and/or they extend well beyond the responsibilities of business and management educators (e.g. library and CIT provision, counselling services).

From the perspective of the reviewers and their reports good practice in these areas would appear to be characterised by:

- ❖ effective monitoring and record systems for tracking student progress;
- ❖ transparent and robust human support systems (e.g. personal tutorials, skills sessions) that are sufficiently fine-tuned to meet the distinctive needs of particular groups of students (e.g. part-time, mature, overseas); and
- ❖ easily accessible and 'user friendly' resources, both paper-based and electronic, covering major aspects of the student learning experience (e.g. placement, personal and professional development, provision of support services).

Institutions that have something to offer in these areas are shown in Appendix I.

4.0 Discussion

As anticipated, notwithstanding their limitations, the subject review reports are a very rich source of data about business and management provision at a particular point in time. From the analyses which have been undertaken, there are various implications for BEST and the wider business and management community. Two sets of implications are highlighted here. These relate to the pedagogic principles that appear to underlie the judgements made by the subject reviewers, and priorities for future research and development activities.

4.1 Pedagogic principles

Although subject reviewers were instructed to eschew comparative judgements, examination of both the

overview and institutional reports suggest that their deliberations were informed by a number of what can be labelled, 'pedagogic principles' (Ottewill & Macfarlane 2003; 2004a). Examples of these, together with some indication as to where and how they might be applied, are shown in Table 5.

The existence of such principles suggests that the reviewers, albeit implicitly, were operating within an evaluative framework based on notions of 'good practice' and 'excellence'. It is from these principles that the characteristics of an 'ideal type' provider can be derived (Ottewill & Macfarlane 2004b).

4.2 Research and development (R&D)

The content of the institutional reports points to many features of business and management provision which are worthy of further investigation. Some of these fed directly into the setting of priorities for the Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL) projects. Others perhaps are more tangential.

Principle	Application
flexibility	providing students with as much choice as possible over when, how and what they study
strategic thinking	particularly with respect to teaching, learning and assessment; student support and guidance; and learning resources
transparency	ensuring that learners are aware of what is expected of them in terms of outcomes; assessed tasks; and how to improve their performance
pedagogic pluralism	using a variety of teaching methods and assessment practices to reflect the multi-faceted nature of learning outcomes and diversity of learning styles
learner participation	adopting teaching practices and techniques which stimulate student involvement in the learning process
consistency	in operating processes that impact directly on students (e.g. marking) and quality enhancement
collaboration	between all the various contributors to the student learning experience and those with a stake in the educational enterprise (e.g. employers, professional bodies)
stakeholder involvement	in shaping the curriculum and contributing to quality assurance and enhancement procedures
self-criticism	the need for an evaluative orientation with respect to quality enhancement
embedding of good practice	opportunities and procedures for sharing and disseminating innovative approaches that have proved to be successful and replacing bad with good practice

Table 5: Pedagogic principles informing subject review

One consideration of particular significance for the business and management community is the extent to which business terminology has entered the lexicon of educational practice and the pursuit of quality in higher education. For example, terms and concepts associated with strategic thinking, stakeholder engagement and the learning organisation are explicitly or implicitly used in making judgements on the quality of provision. Arguably this places additional responsibilities on business and management educators and suggests that there are some very distinctive contributions that they might make in taking forward the quality agenda. Some suggestions as to the kinds of questions that might serve as the basis for potential R&D projects in this respect are provided in Table 6.

These and similar questions can be said to provide the basis for developing further a scholarly approach to business and management education.

- ❖ commission research and development initiatives in those priority areas not covered by FDTL5 funded projects;
- ❖ liaise with other LTSN subject centres in determining the extent to which the pedagogic principles which underpinned the business and management subject reviews were applied in other subject areas; and
- ❖ look for ways in which business and management subject expertise, in areas such as corporate strategy, appraisal and quality management, can be used to inform and enhance the processes and practices of business and management education.

5.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that BEST:

- ❖ consider further uses to which the content of the Subject Review reports might be put, including additional ad hoc interrogations and analyses of the aims and objectives of providers;
- ❖ exploit opportunities for disseminating more widely the findings from the project;

Aspect	
<i>Curriculum design, content and organisation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How can business curricula be designed in ways that address the needs of businesses and other types of organisation in the area within which the provider is located? ❖ What can be done to ensure the compatibility of 'hidden' and explicit curricula in business education? ❖ What are the most effective means of meeting the demands of 'problem' and/or marginalised components of the curriculum (e.g. numeracy, business environment/ethics)?
<i>Teaching, learning and assessment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How can management theory be most effectively utilised in the design of teaching, learning and assessment strategies? ❖ What is the ideal blend of teaching methods on business and management programmes? ❖ In what ways might the principles of staff appraisal be applied to the assessment of students?
<i>Student progression and achievement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Do theories of employee motivation have anything to offer those seeking to increase 'retention rates' for students on business courses?
<i>Student support and guidance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ What are the most effective ways of embedding centrally provided support services in the student learning experience? ❖ Do the principles and practices of human resource management, particularly those relating to equal opportunities, offer any insights into the best means of 'celebrating diversity' within the student body?
<i>Learning resources</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How might the principles of effective teamwork be applied to the creation and operation of multi-professional groups within academia?
<i>Quality management and enhancement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In what ways might the pedagogic principles listed in Table 5 be applied at unit and course level to enhance quality?

Table 6: Indicative questions for potential R&D projects

6.0 References

- BEST 2002, 'Best funds available for an Analysis of the QAA Subject Review'
<http://www.business.ltsn.ac.uk/news/QAA%20Review.htm>, accessed 15/10/02.
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Appendix A: Institutional Coverage of Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA) and Subject Review (SR)

Pre-1992 Universities

Name	TQA	SR
Aston	Satisfactory	24
Bath ¹	Excellent	
Birkbeck College (London)	Satisfactory	21
Birmingham	Satisfactory	21
Bradford	Satisfactory	
Brunel	Satisfactory	
Cambridge	Satisfactory	
Cranfield	Excellent	
Durham	Satisfactory	
East Anglia		23
Exeter		22
Hull	Satisfactory	23
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	Excellent	
Keele	Satisfactory	21
Kent	Satisfactory	21
King's College London	Excellent	
Lancaster	Excellent	
Leeds	Satisfactory	22
Leicester	Satisfactory	
Liverpool		23
London Business School	Excellent	
London School of Economics	Excellent	24
Loughborough	Excellent	22
Manchester	Excellent	24
Newcastle upon Tyne	Satisfactory	
Nottingham	Excellent	
Open University	Excellent	
Oxford	Satisfactory	
Queens Belfast		23
Queen Mary and Westfield College	Satisfactory	
Reading	Satisfactory	21
Royal Holloway		21
Salford	Satisfactory	
Sheffield	Satisfactory	
Southampton	Satisfactory	23
Surrey	Excellent	
UMIST	Excellent	
Warwick	Excellent	
York		22

Post-1992 Universities

Name	TQA	SR
Anglia Polytechnic	Satisfactory	20
Bournemouth	Satisfactory	22
Brighton	Satisfactory	
Central England	Satisfactory	21
Central Lancashire	Satisfactory	22
City	Excellent	23
Coventry	Satisfactory	22
De Montfort	Excellent	
Derby	Satisfactory	22
East London	Satisfactory	
Greenwich	Satisfactory	20
Hertfordshire	Satisfactory	23
Huddersfield	Satisfactory	
Humberside	Satisfactory	
Kingston	Excellent	
Leeds Metropolitan	Satisfactory	24
Liverpool John Moores	Satisfactory	22
London Guildhall	Satisfactory	22
Luton	Satisfactory	
Manchester Metropolitan	Satisfactory	23
Middlesex	Satisfactory	22
North London	Satisfactory	24
Northumbria	Excellent	22
Nottingham Trent	Excellent	
Oxford Brookes	Satisfactory	24
Plymouth	Satisfactory	
Portsmouth	Satisfactory	
Sheffield Hallam	Satisfactory	21
South Bank	Satisfactory	20
Staffordshire	Satisfactory	
Sunderland	Satisfactory	
Teesside	Satisfactory	
Thames Valley	Satisfactory	19
Ulster	Satisfactory	24
West of England	Excellent	23
Westminster	Satisfactory	20
Wolverhampton	Satisfactory	23

Note

¹ Where there are gaps, this means that the institution was not subject to that particular quality review process.

Appendix A contd.:

University Colleges

Name	TQA	SR
Bath Spa		20
Bucks Chilterns	Satisfactory	22
Canterbury Christ Church	Satisfactory	21
Liverpool Hope		24
Southampton Institute	Satisfactory	22
Worcester		21

Other - Higher Education

Name	TQA	SR
Bolton Institute of HE	Satisfactory	
Bradford College		21
Cheltenham and Gloucester College of HE	Satisfactory	
Chester College of HE		21
College of St Mark and St John		22
Edge Hill College of HE	Satisfactory	
King Alfred's College		22
London Institute	Satisfactory	22
Ripon and York St John	Satisfactory	21
St Martins College		21
St Marys College		17
Trinity and All Saints	Satisfactory	

Further Education Institutions

Name	TQA	SR
Accrington and Rossendale College		20
Askham Bryan College		22
Aylesbury College		17 (15) ²
Barking College		20
Barnfield College		20
Barnsley College		23
Basingstoke College of Technology		16
Bedford College		18
Beverley College of Further Education		18
Bishop Auckland College		21
Blackburn College	Satisfactory	22
Blackpool and Fylde College		21
Bolton College		22
Bradford and Ilkley Community College	Satisfactory	
Bridgwater College		23
Brooklands College		17
Burton College		22
Carlisle College	Satisfactory	22
Chesterfield College		21
Chichester College of Arts, Science & Technology		19
City College, Birmingham		20
City College, Manchester		19
City of Bristol College		20
City of Sunderland College		21
College of NW London		21
Coventry Technical College		19
Craven College		20
Crawley College	Satisfactory	20
Croydon College	Satisfactory	20
Darlington College of Technology		19
Dearne Valley College		21
Doncaster College	Satisfactory	22
Dudley College of Technology		22
Eastleigh College		19
Enfield College		16
Exeter College		22
Fareham College		21

Note

2 Figures in brackets indicate the score for the first Subject Review visit.

Appendix A contd.: Further Education Institutions

Farnborough College of Technology	Satisfactory	19
Gateshead College		20
Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology		17
Guildford College of FE and HE	Satisfactory	20
Halton College		21
Name	TQA	SR
Hammersmith and West London College	Satisfactory	20
Henley College, Coventry		19
Herefordshire College of Technology		19(14)*
Highbury College Portsmouth		19
Hopwood Hall College		20
Knowsley Community College		21
Leicester College		17
Loughborough College	Satisfactory	21
Matthew Boulton College of FE and HE		19
Mid-Cheshire College of FE		22
Mid-Kent College of HE and FE		17
North Warwick and Hinkley College		23
NE Surrey College of Technology		20
New College Durham	Satisfactory	21
Newcastle College		19
Newham College of FE		23(19)*
North Cheshire College	Satisfactory	
NE Worcestershire College	Unsatisfactory/ Satisfactory	
North Hertfordshire College		21
North Lincolnshire College		19
North Nottinghamshire College		21
North Tyneside College		19
Northbrook College Sussex	Satisfactory	20
Northumberland College		17
Oaklands College		21
Oldham College		18
Oxford College of FE		19
Park Lane College		20

Appendix B: Ad hoc interrogations

Area	Initiator	Finding
Business ethics	Researcher	very few references in aims and objectives
Skills	Researcher	wide diversity of, and possible lack of consistency in, terms used to describe groups of skills
Peer observation schemes	BEST officer	list of institutions praised for their schemes
International students	Researcher	little acknowledgement of challenges and concerns
Entrepreneurship/enterprise/risk	Researcher	relatively few references in aims and objectives
Learning and teaching methods	BEST officers	See supplementary table below
Dissertations and alternatives	BEST officer	extensive use of dissertations as a mode of summative assessment for undergraduates and postgraduates, recognition of some problems involved, very few references to alternatives
Method	Finding	
Lectures	A number of institutions are identified as using some form of participative/interactive lecturing	
Seminars	A few references, which are not particularly inspiring	
Games, simulations and role plays	Many of the references are generic, particularly those relating to role-play. Only one reference to a 'game'	
Case studies	Tend to appear in lists of approaches to teaching and/or assessment, although a few references go a little further and provide tantalising glimpses of some more creative uses of case studies	
Computer aided learning/assessment	A few fairly general references to computer aided learning; only a couple to testing/assessment	
Group work	A large number of references to group work, including group activities, tasks, projects, presentations, assessment, tutorials	

Appendix C: Extracts from the Subject Overview Report illustrating features from aims and objectives and the six aspects that would appear to be of particular significance

Aims and objectives

'Typically aims are expressed in a way that could be applied at all levels.' (para.6)

'Some are more specifically related to business and management ...' (6)

'Different levels are rarely distinguished in the aims' (7)

'Objectives... are distinguished by programme and level ... (and) are clearly expressed in terms of learning outcomes.' (8).

Curriculum design, content and organisation

'A strong feature... is the flexibility offered to students in mode and time of attendance, entry and exit points, transfer between programmes and progression to further studies.' (11)

'Undergraduate degree programmes often provide exemptions from certain professional body examinations and clear paths to professional qualifications...' (13)

'curricula... (that are) appropriately progressive and challenging in the demands they place on students, coherent in structure and suitably designed to meet the aims and objectives set... strong emphasis on development of independent learning and the habit of lifelong learning' (14)

'The development of subject-specific, transferable, and cognitive skills' (15)

'The vocational nature of the provision... integration of theory with practice... the preparation of students for subsequent employment... visits to businesses, and the use of work-based learning and case studies... work placements... (ensuring) that curricula are informed by current practice...' (16)

Teaching, learning and assessment

Positive features of strategies:

vocational relevance;
integration of skills development;
incorporation of work experience and learning needs; and
effective management of student workloads. (18)

Positive features of teaching sessions (good practice):

'innovative and well-planned sessions delivered by enthusiastic and appropriately qualified subject-specialist staff, using a variety of teaching methods and linking theory with practice effectively';
use of practising professionals as visiting lecturers;
using simulation exercises;
application of vocationally relevant skills. (19)
'Effectiveness of... approaches to encourage independent learning, often supported by learning materials... innovative use of IT to support learning' (20)

Positive features of assessment:

'variety of assessment methods matched appropriately to learning outcomes';
clear assignment tasks;
clear assessment criteria;
rigorous processes for marking and internal moderation
work related approaches to assessment' (21)

Negative features of assessment:

variable quality;
lacking focus;
too brief.
'formative feedback was provided too late for it to be of value' (23)

Appendix C contd.:

Student progression and achievement

'recruitment has been generally buoyant...'

'successful recruitment of a diverse range and age of applicants, often with non-traditional entry qualifications. The high added-value provided to such students was often praised' (25)

'Rates of progression... were variable' (26)

'initiatives to help rectify... problems (of low progression and retention), including diagnostic interviews and additional support during the early stages of study' (27)

'Although students generally attained an appropriate level and range of key skills, the reviewers noted instances of deficient analytical, quantitative and academic referencing skills and... work lacking critical analysis and theoretical underpinning.' (28)

'The employability of students... is a positive feature of all programmes
The accuracy and availability of first and subsequent destination data could be improved in some cases' (29)

Student support and guidance

'Admissions procedures are generally judged to be sound... open days and advisory interviews... induction... well structured and comprehensive... course handbooks... generally well produced' (31)

'Accessible and effective personal tutor systems ... students perceive staff as approachable ... study skills and support for specific learning needs' (32)

'impressive and comprehensive range of centrally-provided specialist support services' (33)

students 'generally (kept) aware of career opportunities' (34)

Learning resources

'learning resources strategies... providing a framework for the acquisition, deployment and renewal of resources.' (36)

'library and IT facilities are integrated in learning resource centres (LRCs)' (37)

'Library provision... stocks... access... opening hours... LRC induction on-line catalogues, study spaces... photocopying etc facilities... support from LRC staff... Liaison between LRCs and academic staff (37/8)

'IT equipment and facilities... appropriate and up-to-date... open access... effective booking systems... user support... use of IT facilities is not being fully and effectively integrated into the curricula' (39)

'The overall range and quality of teaching accommodation is adequate and well maintained' (40)

Quality management and enhancement

'The reviewers identified the following quality assurance mechanisms as making a contribution to quality management and enhancement... staff mentoring systems... peer observation of teaching and review... annual subject review' (42)

'less evidence that the processes were embedded and systematic engagement with quality systems was often lacking... issues are not always followed up with actions... lack of self-critical approach... lack of systematic data collection' (43)

'Staff development activity... appraisal and induction... staff undertaking industrial placements and work shadowing...'
(44)

'effective engagement of students in quality assurance processes...'
(45)

'effective employer and professional body involvement in quality assurance processes' (46)

'internal verification was insufficiently rigorous not always followed up with appropriate action' (47)

'Lack of rigour in the application of quality management and enhancement processes is reflected in the SADs... largely descriptive and lacked evaluative comment... other stakeholders not involved in the preparation of the document' (48)

Appendix D: Features where there is some quantification

[This table is a summary of those elements of provision from the Business and Management Subject Overview Report where there is some quantification. Note that the language of the report, in which percentages have not always been provided, has been used.]

Aspect	Positive	Negative
Curriculum design content organisation		
flexibility (para 11)	three-quarters+	
demands, coherence etc of curricula (14)	more than half	curricula structure criticised in 30% of cases and limited/low levels of challenge in 20%, about 80% of criticisms apply to FEIs
skill development (15)	70% + commended	25%
vocationality (16)	35% commended	15%
Teaching, learning and assessment		
strategies (18)	50% +	
teaching sessions (19)	80% + commended	
independent learning/higher order skills (20)	25% + commended	20%
assessment (21/22)	60% commended in at least one aspect	50% of those awarded 2 or 3
feedback (23)	40% +	
Student progression and achievement		
widening access (25)	53% FEIs / 37% HEIs commended	
Student support and guidance		
strategies (31)	30% effective in driving provision	
admissions procedures (31)		5% weak
induction (31)	75% + well structured and comprehensive	
course handbooks (31)		30% insufficient/ inaccurate
personal tutor systems (32)	70% + commended	
staff-student relationships (32)	50% + very good	
support for specific learning needs (32)	30% good (esp FEIs with commitment to widening access)	
support + guidance generally (32)		minority
centrally provided specialist support services (33)	60% + impressive and comprehensive	
liaison between academic and support staff (33)	20% commended	

Appendix D contd.:

Aspect	Positive	Negative
Learning resources		
strategies (36)	68% judged effective	
library/IT integration (37)	Majority	
library provision (37)	55% strength	
stocks/journal access (37)		25%
opening hours (38)		6% (part-time students)
student support from LRC staff (38)	30% commended	
liaison between LRCs and academics (38)	30% particularly effective	
Quality management and enhancement		
comprehensive systems (42)	60% highly commended	
staff mentoring (42)	13% of reports	
peer observation (42)	25% of reports	
annual subject review (42)	26% of reports	
implementation (42)		15% poor
issues/action (43)		18%
process (43)		26% not in place/poorly implemented
self-critical approach (43)	8%	
student data		16% deficient
staff development (44)	almost half commended	
student engagement (45)	nearly half commended	
employer/professional body involvement (46)	16% noted	
internal verification (47)		30% (of FEIs?) insufficiently rigorous/robust
SADs		21% largely descriptive/lacked evaluative comment: small number of other stakeholders not involved

Appendix E: Curriculum, Design, Content and Organisation (CDCO): Examples of good practice. Extracts from institutional reports.

The examples of good practice and innovations listed below are indicative rather than comprehensive. Because of the volume and variety of material that could have been included a degree of selectivity has been applied.

Institution (Score for CDCO)	Example
Aston (4)	' <i>Excellent</i> work-placement opportunities are an important feature of undergraduate programmes in year three.' (para 12)
Birmingham (4)	'The MSc Marketing is aimed at graduates wishing to start or develop careers in marketing, and provides an <i>excellent</i> combination of theoretical and practical marketing modules with an emphasis on contemporary issues.' (para 13)
Bucks Chilterns (4)	'The Comparative Management Culture module in year two is the result of an <i>excellent</i> project in cross-cultural research with the School's international partners.' 'The new curriculum developments in Retail Management, E-Commerce and Advertising and Promotions Management are <i>commendable</i> examples of close ties with industry.' (para 13)
Canterbury Christ Church (4)	'The recently established BA International Business programme is an <i>innovative</i> addition, linking with an established network of European universities centred upon Holland International Business School, the Hogeschool at Diemen. While the reviewers were impressed with the programme, they identified a need to ensure that students fully comprehended the complexities of the dual qualifications through the information disseminated to them.' (para 10)
Chesterfield (4)	'...opportunities to enhance ICT skills, including <i>innovative</i> use of the Sage Computerised Accounts package.' (para 12)
College of St Mark and St John (3)	'The reviewers particularly <i>commend</i> the consideration given to providing a focus on practices in non-profit organisations, which has relevance to employment in the regional environment and accords with the aspirations of many students.' (para 13)
Coventry (4)	'All undergraduate programmes make use of a skills matrix, with the BA Business Enterprise being particularly <i>innovative</i> in the area of skills development. On professional programmes, knowledge and subject specific skills are developed and students are enabled to apply them in a work context.' (para 12)
Croydon (3)	'These modules complement each other and build into an integrated whole around the theme of the Reflective Practice and Personal Development module. This is highly rated by the students and the external examiner. The programme includes the <i>innovative</i> use of peer assessment.' (para 14)
Darlington (3)	'Relations with employers are <i>excellent</i> and productive, and facilitate local visits by students to the work environment and by employers to the college.' (para 14)
Derby (4)	'The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development renewed accreditation of the CIPD in 2000. It <i>commended</i> the University on its approach to skills-mapping and has adopted this for wider dissemination. The University is a Chartered Institute of Marketing Centre of <i>Excellence</i> .' (para 15)

Appendix E contd.:

Institution (Score for CDCO)

Dudley (4)

Example

'All areas of the curriculum develop common skills that are mapped over each of the units to obtain a comprehensive coverage; this is highlighted by the external verifier as *good practice*.' (para 13)

'An *innovative* new pathway, Management of International Risk and Finance, has been developed in partnership with colleges in Finland, Spain and Greece, and is approved by Edexcel as an additional element to the course.' (para 9)

East Anglia (4)

'The development of an interdisciplinary perspective is *imaginatively* achieved by the use of a business simulation in the MSc courses and an international consultancy project in the MBA.' (para 11)

Fareham (4)

'In order to increase employer consultation, the School has now put in place formal mechanisms to help to ensure currency and to promote *innovation* in the curricula through an Employer Perception of Course Review committee.' (para 12)

Greenwich (3)

'The School offers a distinctive provision and is to be *commended* on the *innovation* of many of its programmes, in particular its MBA Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, its BA degree in Tourism Management and MA degrees in Arts Management and Cultural Tourism Management.' (para 9)

Leeds (3)

'The accounting undergraduate provision provides core modules at Levels 1 and 2 which cover the basic themes of business finance, financial accounting and management accounting. The final year of study provides a broad range of options and electives which allow students to specialise. There is ample opportunity for students to gain knowledge and understanding of the subject field, and to develop both cognitive and professional skills. In this regard the provision is *excellent*.' (para 11)

'The curricula are rich and diverse providing an *excellent* student experience.' (para 13)

'*Commendably*, students are required to make oral presentations based on their dissertations.' (para 12)

Liverpool Hope (4)

'A recently established Employers Forum is providing external input into the curriculum. The Centre responds rapidly to identified community opportunities and needs, the latest example being the introduction of the Nursery Management programme in 2001. Several staff are collaborating on a study and evaluation of this *innovative* course, and other research projects are developing directly from teaching activities.' (para 13)

London Institute (4)

'There are *excellent* examples of student collaboration with major retailers and design agencies.' (para 10)

Loughborough University (3)

'The BSc Retail Automotive Management (Ford) is designed in collaboration with the Ford Motor Company for students sponsored by the company and its dealership network, and is part of an *innovative* partnership which includes the development of the Ford College on the University campus.' (para 9)

Manchester Metropolitan (4)

'This occurs through commercial programmes and an *excellent* placement system that draws on a wide range of marketing and retail organisations.' (para 13)

Middlesex (4)

'The BA Human Resource Management is an *excellent* example of liaison with a professional body, which epitomises the aim of "preparing students for the world of work".' (para 13)

Appendix E Contd.

Institution (Score for CDCO)	Example
Middlesex (4) (contd.)	'The Consulting to Organisations module is an <i>innovative</i> step in preparing students to make the most of their placement, and students and work-placement employers commented favourably on its provision and content.' (para 12)
Oxford Brookes (4)	'Curriculum design and renewal are informed by recent developments in teaching and learning as appropriate, for example, with the <i>innovative</i> use of peer-assisted learning through which students who have completed a module offer support and guidance to those currently studying it.' (para 14)
Ripon and St John (3)	'Postgraduate provision consists of the MA Leading Innovation and Change (MALIC), offered jointly in partnership with the University of York. This is delivered part-time over two years for managers, mainly in the health sector. The programme design ensures the development of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and the promotion of a learning community amongst the students. The design of this particularly <i>innovative</i> programme is commended.' (para 11)
St Marys (2)	'Curricular design demonstrates currency and <i>innovation</i> through a distinctive focus on the ethical dimension.' (para 13)
Thames Valley (3)	'A summer school assists students in improving their academic performance or in accelerating their progression at Levels 1 and 2. Another <i>commendable</i> feature is the learning-skills development scheme. Although not formally assessed, this scheme is well integrated within the design and content of the curriculum and has been very successful in improving students' transferable skills at all levels.' (para 10)
Wakefield (3)	'There is some evidence of curriculum <i>innovation</i> , for example, animation techniques in the HND European Travel and Tourism, which is centre-devised and approved by Edexcel, and the international work experience opportunities in the HND Sports Science.' (para 15)
Westminster (3)	'A noteworthy <i>innovation</i> , recognised within the curricula, has been the establishment and operation of a student-run consultancy company which enables them to gain practical experience of business.' (para 10)
Wolverhampton (4)	'An example of <i>good practice</i> in the curriculum is the international study visit, which provides a valuable comparative study of human resources practice and a development opportunity. This has been complimented by the CIPD.' (para 12)

As can be seen, some of the practice illustrated in this table relates to the substance of what is being studied, while some relates to mechanisms for learner support and enhancing the quality of the student learning experience more generally.

Appendix F: Assessment and Feedback: Examples of good practice. Extracts from institutional reports.

The first group of institutions are those that were awarded a grade 4 for Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA).

Institution	Commendation
Aston	range of effective assessment methods is used, and the requirements are well articulated in module information. Students clearly understand the assessment criteria and expressed <i>appreciation</i> of the quality of feedback they receive from academic staff.' (para 22)
Blackpool and Fylde	'Written feedback on assessed work, using standardised report forms often supplemented by written comments on scripts, is generally <i>encouraging and helpful</i> . Students affirmed that written feedback is normally supplemented by extensive discussion in tutorials... The introduction in every module of an early, largely formative, assessment is intended to assist the many mature and other non-traditional entrants to these courses.' (para 18)
Bolton	'There is a wide range of assessment activities, mostly of a very business-focused type. Case studies, reports, presentations, analysis of live data and consultancy style analyses are all used. One feature is the use of live scenarios contributed by local employers, which are researched and analysed by students and then fed back to the employer. There is also a significant, appropriate and effective use of internet material.' (para 23)
Bolton	'There are examples of <i>very good practice</i> in assessment feedback, and this could usefully be shared among the whole course team.' (para 24)
Bolton	'Many examples exist of <i>sound</i> formative feedback and class <i>clear</i> tr guidance, though there is a case for making the links between assessments, marking schemes and learning objectives more fully and consistently developed. Work is already being undertaken to achieve this. Though feedback is generally good for all students, a lack of conformity in the quality, style, and content of feedback is a consequence of the autonomy enjoyed by the different schools involved in the provision. The practices and policy of the Media School, which might usefully be considered for adoption as a standard, were regarded by the reviewers as <i>exemplary</i> .' (para 17)
Exeter College	'The reviewers' scrutiny of student work demonstrated that <i>effective</i> assessment design exists across the provision. It is appropriate to the level, student profile and to the clearly-stated module learning outcomes. A variety of assessment methods is used including examinations, reports, case-study analyses, tests and essays. Tasks are <i>well conceived</i> and varied.' (para 18)
Hertfordshire	'Current students and graduates reported that they were <i>fully satisfied</i> with the amount and quality of written feedback they received on their assessments. Lecturers also provide feedback in a variety of additional ways, for example collectively to class groups, by reviewing past examination papers in tutorials, and by engaging students in the anonymous marking of their predecessors' work.' (para 20)
Highbury College	'The students' work is <i>carefully</i> marked, often with detailed written feedback and helpful suggestions, which aid the students' development.' (para 16)

Appendix F Contd.

Institution	Commendation
Leeds Metropolitan	'Samples of students' work indicate that generally <i>consistent, detailed and useful</i> written feedback is provided for students through feedback sheets, as well as through annotations on returned work and subsequent discussion. This was confirmed by current and former students. A standardised feedback sheet has been recently introduced across the provision.' (para 22)
Liverpool Hope	'Students receive detailed feedback that provides them with advice on changes needed and how grades may be improved. The range of assessment techniques used <i>impresses</i> external examiners and verifiers, and are particularly relevant to potential managers as they are often linked to the requirements of organisations.' (para 18)
Loughborough	'Examples of <i>good practice</i> were found in the BSc Retail Automotive Management (Ford) programme, which features some highly <i>innovatory</i> approaches to assessment and takes a range of explicit and necessary steps to prepare its students to undertake their assignments and examinations.' (para 20)
Manchester	'Assessment methods and grading criteria are <i>clearly explained</i> in student handbooks, and students understand these procedures. Marking systems for assignments, essays and examination scripts are applied with rigour and incorporate a commendable and <i>well-established</i> set of double-marking procedures.' (para 20) 'There is <i>considerable evidence</i> of detailed, <i>good quality</i> and timely written and oral feedback from staff on students' assignments. Such feedback plays a significant part in the teaching and learning strategy, and is <i>appreciated</i> by students.' (para 21)
Oxford Brookes	'The School has actively developed a range of <i>non-traditional but rigorous</i> assignment formats; for example, consultancy projects by students for real clients, and a radio presentation. These methods have been disseminated to all academic staff, and their effectiveness researched and evaluated to maintain challenge and fairness to students. Conventional assignments, dissertations and examinations combine with less conventional assessment methods to effect fair and appropriate tests of the students' knowledge and skills in each module.' (para 20) 'Students receive detailed and constructive feedback on the quality of their work against the assessment criteria and their demonstration of transferable skills. The <i>good quality of formative comments</i> by assessors was endorsed by current and former students and by the reviewers.' (para 21)
Ulster	'Marking criteria are generally <i>excellent</i> .' (para 19)
Warrington	'The assessments are <i>imaginative</i> , relevant to the student experience and are linked to the learning outcomes. Examples include the application of the marketing mix to the students' own organisations, and a training needs analysis. An assessment matrix demonstrates the range of methodologies used within the course units.' (para 17)
Worcester	'The <i>quality</i> of written feedback is <i>very high</i> , and students receive detailed and informative comments. Tutors also give additional verbal feedback when asked. Students reported that this feedback greatly enhances their learning experience.' (para 22)
York	'There is effective use of both formative and summative assessment, and <i>excellent</i> feedback is provided on all work.' (para 20)

Appendix F Contd.

A number of other providers, although not securing a grade 4 for TLA, were praised for their approach to assessment and feedback.

Institution	Commendation
Accrington and Rossendale (3)	'The quality of feedback to students is variable but generally good; feedback is constructive, with clear guidance on how to improve. The best feedback is <i>excellent</i> , and there is an opportunity to share this practice, to bring all feedback up to this high quality.' (para 22)
Bath Spa (3)	'Feedback to students on assignment performance is <i>excellent</i> . It is detailed, constructive and refers to specific assessment criteria.' (para 16)
Salford College (3)	'As confirmed in the external verifier reports, feedback to students was always sufficient and often <i>excellent</i> . Work examined by the reviewers shows that such feedback contributes significantly to the learning process and is a <i>major strength</i> of the provision. Students find this feedback very helpful.' (para 21)
Weymouth (3)	'The course team has developed <i>excellent</i> assessment criteria for each assignment that are well articulated and explained to students. The team has done a considerable amount of work in this area and all assessments and criteria are presented clearly in the <i>excellent</i> module handbooks students receive.' (para 18)
Wigan and Leigh (3)	'Group work is included in some modules as part of the assessed work. The <i>excellent</i> practices involving student peer assessment are to be encouraged.' (para 21)

Appendix G: Teaching, Learning and Assessment: Examples of good practice. Extracts from institutional reports.

All these examples relate to grade 4 institutions.

Institution	Commendation
Askham Bryan	'The recently introduced mandatory unit, on research methods, is a <i>good innovation</i> which enables students to complete their work more effectively.' (para 18)
Aston	'Much of the independent learning is supported by surgery group sessions and <i>high-quality</i> resource packs, which include lecture handouts, PowerPoint presentations, coursework requirements and a clear articulation of assessment criteria and intended learning outcomes. Sessions with students include, for example, video conferencing, conference-style poster presentations and simulations. The <i>high quality</i> of support provided by administrative and technical staff is clearly apparent and appreciated by students.' (para 18)
Aston	'Partial autonomy in allocating resources has led to an <i>impressive development</i> of media and video-supported learning. Course learning activities are professionally recorded by Aston Media, a professional television and multimedia production centre. The recordings are used extensively in the School, particularly in the postgraduate programmes, to enhance students' learning experiences.' (para 20)
Bournemouth	'Clearly-defined learning objectives are identified in all programme and unit guides, which are of a <i>high level</i> . <i>Extensive</i> support material is available in printed and electronic format; students demonstrate an <i>impressive</i> level of commitment to their learning programmes.' (para 15)
Exeter	'At postgraduate level, particularly on the MBA programme, teaching and learning support materials are <i>excellent</i> , and in many postgraduate modules students are given extensive learning packs, both on paper and electronically.' (para 18)
Hertfordshire	'Students are provided with <i>good quality</i> written materials to support their learning in modules. There has also been <i>good progress</i> in developing the learning support opportunities made available by Studynet.' (para 17)
Leeds Metropolitan	'The Business School has a <i>clearly articulated</i> strategy for the provision of effective teaching, learning and assessment. This focuses on adoption of a range of methods designed to encourage students to become more independent in their learning, and emphasises the importance of key skills development as well as acquisition of subject knowledge.' (para 16)
Liverpool Hope	'An example of <i>good teaching practice</i> was observed in the Faculty's quality enhancement programme, introduced in 1999. This programme has facilitated dialogue among colleagues regarding, for example, introduction of a range of internet-based teaching, thereby encouraging students to become more independent in their learning.' (para 20)
Liverpool Hope	'Aspects of <i>good practice</i> include the policy to promote Hope Graduate Qualities such as perseverance, self-discipline, initiative and imagination, and to provide undergraduate students with the opportunity to develop transferable skills. The Management and Business Centre benefits from the expertise of a Teaching and Learning Fellow who has an understanding of the broad issues of particular interest or concern to the College.' (para 15)

Appendix G Contd.

Institution	Commendation
Liverpool Hope (contd)	' <i>Innovative</i> uses of teaching media include in-house videos to bring practitioner viewpoints directly into the classroom and videoconferencing to permit students in the Network of Hope Colleges to communicate and interact.' (para 16)
Loughborough	'Approaches to teaching and learning across the programmes are <i>effective</i> . Most notably, the teaching delivery and learning opportunities on the BSc Retail Automotive Management (Ford) programme and the block delivery methods in the MSc Airport Planning and Management, show an awareness and appreciation of developments in teaching and learning that reflect <i>thoughtful</i> teaching and learning strategies. (para 16) 'The reviewers are particularly <i>impressed</i> by the learning materials presented to participants on the BSc Retail Automotive Management (Ford) programme, which are of <i>exemplary</i> quality.' (para 17)
LSE	'Students in the IR Department are <i>very well prepared</i> and supported for their placement by the link tutor. Similarly, CEMS students undergo appropriate briefing for their study period abroad and undertake an approved programme of assessed study in their partner university.' (para 18)
Manchester Metropolitan	'...for example, formal lecture sessions, which may involve up to 200 students, feature the use of videos, visual images and interactive discussion.' (para 17)
North London	' <i>Effective</i> written materials are available to support learning, including internet-based information.' (para 20)
North Warwickshire	' <i>Good-quality</i> course learning materials are in evidence, and staff are committed to the use of the internet, providing addresses consistently when referencing support materials. The development of a college intranet is providing the opportunity for students' ready access to course documentation, tutor-devised learning materials and teaching notes.' (para 19)
Oxford Brookes	'Examples of <i>innovative good practice</i> include student-led reviews of the previous week's work material and the opportunity for students to take cue cards, derived from week-by-week independent study, into examinations.' (para 16)
Queens, Belfast	'In general, there is a <i>stimulating</i> learning environment in which student participation, independent learning and literacy and numeracy skills are <i>consistently</i> progressed into Stages 2 and 3.' (para 24)
South Tyneside	'The teaching team recognises the <i>strength</i> of the workplace in providing relevant learning opportunities allied to the teaching, and the year one units all rely heavily and effectively on the workplace as a base for learning and development.' (para 16)
Stockport	'The successful integration of resource-based learning into the learning strategies is <i>commendable</i> .' (para 19)
Ulster	'The faculty is <i>fully successful</i> in its strategy to: provide a range of teaching and learning opportunities throughout all programmes; foster independent learning; integrate theoretical and practical knowledge and skills; develop transferable skills; encourage collaborative learning and promote positive attitudes towards lifelong learning.' (para 15) ' <i>Good practice</i> includes pre-planning; clearly stated learning objectives; varied activities during sessions; good use of visual aids and high-quality handouts.' (para 16)

Appendix G Contd.

Institution

Worcester

Commendation

'The Department has a *clearly articulated and effective* teaching and learning strategy that is centred on the use of a range of teaching methods intended to help students accomplish a transition from dependence to independence in their learning abilities.' (para 18)

York

'The teaching, learning and assessment strategy fosters progression between programmes, especially in the development of analytical and critical skills appropriate to each level. The encouragement of students on all programmes to develop such skills is an *excellent* feature of the Centre's provision.' (para 19)

Some examples of institutions, which did not score grade 4, but where there is evidence of good practice are provided below:

Institution (score for TLA)

Anglia (3)

Commendation

'In general, teaching was appropriate to the course objectives and there were some examples of *excellent* practice, such as the effective use of audiovisual equipment.' (para 16)

Coventry (3)

'The *excellent* developments in the use of information and communication technology, which underpins the student experience through STiLE and WebCT (paragraphs 13; 16; 32; 40).'

Doncaster (3)

'Student learning is facilitated and supported by the provision of appropriate resources, including some *excellent* materials developed by the teaching staff in the subject area.' (para 18)

Exeter (4)

'At postgraduate level, particularly on the MBA programme, teaching and learning support materials are *excellent*, and in many postgraduate modules students are given extensive learning packs, both on paper and electronically.' (para 18)

Keele (3)

'The sessions benefited from *excellent* learning support material.' (para 17)

New College Durham (3)

'*Excellent* teaching materials are provided, most notably unit booklets which are comprehensive, clear in the objectives and learning outcomes for each session. These also provide case studies and other exercises, and pre-reading for seminars.' (para 14)

Appendix H: Quality Management and Enhancement (QME): Examples of good practice. Extracts from institutional reports.

Institution (Score for QME)

Accrington and Rossendale (3)

Example

'The 'getting it right' scheme is particularly *commended* as it pulls together a group of stakeholders who consider a range of issues raised at student council meetings, including the Higher Education Council, which makes comments and recommendations.' (para 54)

Aston (4)

The University and the School have a strong commitment to quality enhancement. A Technology Strategy Group, Technology in Learning and Teaching Group, Personal Computing Working Party and e-learning initiatives all provide strong evidence of a *forward-looking* approach to recent developments. (para 47)

Barnsley (4)

'There is an *active* annual programme review process incorporating individual module reviews, a mechanism that allows staff to reflect on their teaching and incorporate feedback from students through the analysis of feedback questionnaires.' (para 45)

'The HE Lead Teacher scheme is an *innovative* college-level initiative that provides effective scrutiny of teaching standards' (para 46)

Bolton (4)

'The student surveys are of particular use in the assessment and assurance of quality and the College is to be *commended* on the use of these at both programme and college level. The use of three staged surveys at college level is especially interesting. A 10 per cent sample of students is assessed at the start of their programme, another sample midway through the programme, and a final sample at the end of the programme.' (para 51)

Bournemouth (4)

'The self-assessment document demonstrated a concern for self-evaluation and had been produced as the result of a consultative process. These consultative processes are a *commendable* feature of the provision.' (para 43)

Bucks Chilterns (4)

'In supporting the role of student representatives who sit on committees an *excellent* training manual has been produced.' (para 48)

Carlisle College (4)

'The reviewers were *impressed* with the management of both the internal and external moderation process. Student work showed consistency in marking and internal moderation as well as confirming the positive comments of EVs.' (para 54)

'The College has in place an *effective* system for gaining student views on teaching through module/unit feedback sheets and a report from course tutors.' (para 58)

Central England (3)

'All external examiners' reports must continue the *excellent good practice* of being read by the Vice Chancellor and Pro-Vice Chancellor who now require all course teams to submit a written response to the external examiners' reports.' (para 48)

City of Bristol College (3)

'A well-established practice of teaching observations is in place whereby each full and part-time lecturer is observed at least once each year. This practice is to be *commended*.' (para 44)

City (4)

'Employers' Advisory Boards and professional body requirements are also *effective* in offering quality-enhancing recommendations that have been implemented.' (para 50)

Appendix H Contd.

Institution (Score for QME)	Example
College of St Mark and St John (4)	'The subject group is to be <i>commended</i> for actively engaging with PRAC, the professional advisory committee that meets twice a year and makes significant inputs into the quality management process.' (para 43) 'New staff follow a comprehensive programme of induction, including the <i>highly informative</i> "Hitchhikers Guide to Marjon".' (para 45)
Croydon College (3)	fatS' f development opportunities are identified by a variety of mechanisms, including the <i>excellent</i> teaching observation scheme.' (para 54)
Derby University (4)	'The reviewers are <i>impressed</i> by the way in which a number of constructive suggestions from students have been put forward and adopted.' (para 51) 'The School has recently established a School Advisory Board comprising local employers and stakeholders. The reviewers had the opportunity of meeting the chairman of the Board and hearing at first hand about its increasingly active involvement in the work of the School. It has, for example, been consulted on the currency and relevance of programme curricula. The Board is supported by a separate employers' forum... Staff have <i>good and constructive relationships</i> with the local business community.' (para 52/4)
Greenwich University (2)	'The 1999 student satisfaction survey is an example of <i>good practice</i> in the collection of data that can underpin the basis for future action.' (para 47) 'The School is to be <i>commended</i> for the drawing up of a draft development plan, and for the intention to institute a rigorous audit of current practices, and to develop action plans with measurable success criteria and monitoring processes.' (para 49)
Hertfordshire (4)	'The School has also successfully organised staff development seminars on learning outcomes and has forged peer observation, staff appraisal and staff development into a <i>coherent</i> whole as a means of improving the class-based experience of students.' (para 46)
Hull University (4)	'Particularly <i>noteworthy</i> has been the use of external opinion on MBA programme development.' (para 42)
Keele University (3)	'There is strong evidence of <i>excellent</i> supportive mentoring of new staff across all the departments.' (para 49)
King Alfred's (4)	'An example of <i>good practice</i> within the College is the provision of induction days for newly appointed external examiners.' (para 43) 'It is <i>commendable</i> that issues of concern identified by business students through the survey have been considered in the Group's annual reports and, where appropriate, action points have been developed to address these issues. It is also <i>commendable</i> that the Group has taken action to increase the effectiveness of student involvement in the quality process. Meetings have been held with students to explain the quality assurance processes and the students' role within them.' (para 45)
Leeds Metropolitan (4)	'There is a <i>clear</i> quality assurance feedback loop, spanning course, school, faculty and university levels and involving all stakeholders.' (para 47)
Leeds (4)	'Staff development is also <i>well established</i> for administrative and technical staff, for example in the support for international students and in teaching and learning strategies for programme managers, leading to improvements in the provision for students.' (para 59)

Appendix H Contd.

Institution (Score for QME)

Liverpool Hope (4)

Example

'The reviewers were particularly *impressed* with the strong culture of listening to and learning from students, employers and professional bodies.' (para 41)

'The School has an *effective* policy for peer observation, enabling staff to identify areas for improvement and producing direct benefits for student learning experiences.' (para 42)

Liverpool John Moores (3)

'The MA Marketing document also contains an *excellent* section on the mapping of programme aims and objectives to individual modules.' (para 45)

London Institute (4)

'The LCP (London College of Printing) newspaper, Spotlight, gives detailed information on actions taken, and is an *exemplary* feedback mechanism.' (para 51)

Loughborough (3)

'The reviewers found a number of examples of *good practice* in quality management and enhancement, including the use of a design group system to review BSc Retail Automotive Management (Ford) modules after each delivery, with feedback to students in the current and subsequent cohorts. The BSc Transport Management and Planning students review detailed issues relating to module delivery on the programme, with specific action plans produced each year. Systematic student evaluation of visiting speakers is an effective measure on the masters programme.' (para 47)

Manchester University (4)

'A particular example of *good practice* occurs in PREST (Policy Research in Engineering, Science and Technology), whereby each year the external examiner has the opportunity to discuss the learning experience with the postgraduate cohort prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners.' (para 47)

New College, Durham (3)

'The introduction of anonymous marking is *commendable* as enhancement of quality.' (para 34)

North London (4)

'The external examining system is comprehensive, covering all of the awards, and the School is to be *commended* for the way in which it responds to external examiners' reports.' (para 43)

Oxford Brookes (4)

'A *good* model for review and development of both academic and administrative staff has been established. The first cycle of this review is in progress and the process is working well. Academic staff have received training for peer observation and have carried out the first cycle of observations.' (para 46)

Southampton (4)

'The recent appointment of a teaching and learning co-ordinator is *commended*.' (para 41)

South Cheshire (3)

'There is a *commendable* systematic approach to staff development. The primary emphasis is on continuing professional development and getting staff to achieve teaching qualifications. There is a valuable staff development requirement of staff spending five days in industry every two years, which additionally supports professional updating.' (para 55)

Appendix H Contd.

Institution(Score for QME)

Ulster (4)

Example

'It is apparent that a quality culture is widespread throughout the staff... Across the Faculty, course committees are key elements for ensuring quality of students' learning experiences. There is one committee for each programme. This committee consists of course staff and meets at least once a semester. Its deliberations are informed by individual module teaching teams, external examiners, and formal reports from the staff-student consultative committee (SSCC). The synopsis sheets which are appended to the committees' reports are *commended*. The course committee reports to the School Board, which reports to the Faculty Board. Students testify to the positive enhancing outcomes of this devolved system, quoting the alteration of course requirements following student input to the SSCC.' (para 43/44)

'There is a *clear and strong* commitment to staff development and enhancement of teaching quality.' (para 48)

Warrington (3)

'A staff review and development process makes a *distinctive and significant* contribution to the quality enhancement of the programme. All staff participate in the annual staff review conducted by line managers. The reviews draw on evidence from student evaluation of teaching and student inputs to quality review, as well as from direct staff observation of teaching. A curriculum centre provides appropriate training for classroom observers. The outcome is a personal development plan specifying individual objectives and needs. This is forwarded to the Director of Human Resources and contributes to the formulation of the Institute's annual staff training and development plan. The process is *detailed and thorough*, resulting in high levels of staff development, and the sharing and spread of good practice.' (para 44)

Wolverhampton University (3)

'Most parts of the provision are subject to professional body monitoring and *excellent* relationships have been established with the local practitioner branch network for both the CIM and the CIPD, supporting the vocational nature of the provision.' (para 45)

Appendix I: Other Aspects: Examples of good practice. Extracts from institutional reports.

Institution	Aspect (grade)	Good practice
Bridgwater	Student Support and Guidance (3)	'The tutorial system is <i>excellent</i> and an example of <i>good practice</i> . Tutorials give support on study skills, research skills and time management, supported by informative booklets on these and other topics. Where appropriate, students are referred to other sources of help within and outside the College.'
retsdC	Student Support and Guidance (3)	'In particular, the handbooks for the research project and for continuous personal and professional development are <i>excellent</i> , and might serve as a <i>model</i> for other handbooks.' (para 31)
City	Learning Resources (3)	'An <i>excellent</i> facility is a realistic simulated dealing room that is available to students, primarily those studying for the MSc Investment Management and the MSc Mathematical Trading and Finance.' (para 43)
City	Student Support and Guidance (4)	'Year-Out Tutors and the Year-Out Handbook provide <i>excellent</i> support.' (para 39)
Enfield	Student Support and Guidance (3)	'The College has in place a strategy for student support and guidance, which is provided within an <i>excellent</i> 'On Track' framework. An 'On Track' guide issued to students during their induction period includes information on the student charter, student entitlement, equal opportunities policy and guidance on a range of support services.' (para 32)
Liverpool	Student Support and Guidance (4)	' <i>Excellent</i> and integrated arrangements for the academic and personal support for students, underpinned by a strong commitment of staff to their students and in particular overseas students.' (paragraphs 26; 31; 32).
London Institute	Student Support) and Guidance (4)	' <i>Excellent</i> tutorial records enable course teams to track students' needs and problems.' (para 38)
Northumbria	Student Support and Guidance (4)	'The School's placement office has an <i>excellent</i> record in assisting students to gain placements, and employers confirm its <i>pro-active</i> approach.' (para 36)
Queens Belfast	Student Support and Guidance (4)	'An <i>excellent</i> feature is a specially designed three-day orientation programme for international students, which includes a meeting and greeting service at Belfast Airport, a divisional induction and an invitation to enhance English language skills at the Belfast Centre (para 34)
Westminster	Student Support and Guidance (4)	'Mature and overseas students are offered specific workshops on study skills and report <i>excellent</i> support from tutors.' (para 36)

Note

In Appendices E to I, the italicisation has been added by the authors